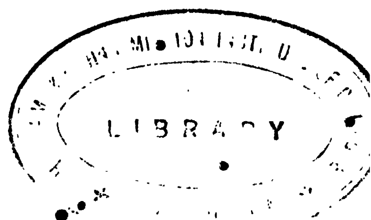


THE COMING POWER

A CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF THE FAR EAST

1898–1905

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"When I look at Japan, and when I look at Great Britain under our present Government, I sometimes feel an ungodly sensation of despair coming over me at the vast gap which separates our ancient civilisation from the more modern civilisation of the Japanese."—LORD ROSEBERY at Esher, March 18, 1905.

WITH TWENTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

LONDON

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

PATERNOSTER ROW

1905



THE KAISER

Photo [illegible]

"When you meet the foe [illegible] defeat him. No quarter will be given [illegible] will be taken. Let all who fall [illegible] hands be at your mercy." p. 98.



THE MIKADO

"We, by the Grace of Heaven, the Emperor of [illegible] seated on the Throne [illegible]" p. 155.



THE TSAR

Photo [illegible]

"Thy fathers made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude," p. 374.

[Frontispiece.

Barid baran Mukerji.
1 College Row. Calcutta

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INTRODUCTION

ONE of our eminent living statesmen has recently exhorted British citizens to cultivate the art of "thinking imperially." The heir to the throne, after his journey through the oversea dominions of the British Empire, brought us back the message that we should "wake up." It is immaterial which advice we take first. If we think imperially, we shall, as a necessary consequence, wake up. If we wake up, we shall fix our thoughts upon the possibilities of the great Empire which is our heritage, and shall thereupon begin to think imperially.

This book is written by a British citizen for British citizens, from the standpoint of a citizen of the British Empire. The events of which it is a record may be said to affect a greater number of the earth's inhabitants than, perhaps, those of any other history embracing a similar period of time ; and every citizen of the United Kingdom is directly interested in the future disposition of the vast areas of the world with which the narrative deals.

The period of action covered is almost commensurate with the life of Port Arthur as a Russian fortress. It begins with the unwarrantable seizure of Kiao-Chau by Germany in November, 1897, which was immediately followed by the acquisition of Port Arthur and Dalny by Russia ; and it outlines the chain of events

in the Far East from that date down to the fall of Port Arthur and the utter defeat of the Russian armies in Manchuria in 1905.

The internal affairs of China, Russia, and Japan are also dealt with in so far as they influence or explain the course of events in the chief theatre of action.

Three central figures will be found to stand out prominently amongst the actors in this world-drama—namely, Kwang-Su, Emperor of China and Son of Heaven; Nicholas II., Tsar of Russia and God on Earth; and Mutsohito, Mikado of Japan and Honourable Gate of his people. Kwang-Su is the embodiment of no less than 464,000,000 of human beings, while Nicholas Romanoff represents 141,000,000, and Mutsohito is the trusted sovereign of 45,000,000. Between them, these three individuals influence the destinies of 650,000,000 of people, or nearly half the inhabitants of the earth. And one may predict, without extravagance, that students of humanity in ages to come will point to the years dealt with in this historical sketch as the commencement of a new epoch in the economy of our planet.

Grouped around the three protagonists are three clusters of characters who may be described generically as satellites; but some of whom exercise considerable influence on the suns around which they revolve.

We shall find the autocratic power of Kwang-Su, for instance, always restricted by the Dowager Empress, Tszu-Hszi, and the other Dowager, Tszu-An; by statesmen such as Li-Hung-Chang and Prince Ching; by generals like Tung-Fu-Hsiang and Jung-Lu; by his Board of Censors; and by the officials of his harem.

Nicholas II. finds his freedom of action constantly restrained by the Empresses Maria Feodorovna and Alexandra Feodorovna; by the Grand Dukes Vladimir,

Sergius, and Paul; by his religious adviser, Pobiedonostseff; by his generals, Kuropatkin, Sakharoff, Stoessel, Gripenberg, and Linievitch; by viceroys like Alexieff; by admirals like Makaroff, Vitoft, and Ukhtomsky; and by statesmen like Sviatopolk-Mirski, Witte, and Mouravieff.

But Mutsohito thinks and acts in complete harmony with his associates, a shrewd man like old William I., of Germany, surrounded by statesmen, generals, and admirals, whose names will never be forgotten—Ito and Katsura; Kuroki, Oku, Nodzu, Nogi, and Oyama; Togo, Uriu, and Kamimura. Forty years ago the Emperor of Japan was a powerless puppet in the hands of the military caste and the territorial aristocracy. To-day he is the mightiest man in Asia, and presides worthily over a State which is universally regarded as the Coming Power in the politics of the world.

All these characters play an important part in moulding the future history of the globe. But, in addition, there are the representatives of expectant Europe and America.

First stands the grasping, restless Kaiser, William II. of Germany, with both hands open, backed by his Chancellor, Von Bulow, his admiral, Von Diedrichs, and his general, Von Waldersee. Beside this German constellation we shall see our own Lord Salisbury, the faithful Claude Macdonald, the shrewd Robert Hart, and the capable soldier Gaselee, striving and compromising, ever on the alert to secure some real advantage for the United Kingdom. And in the background are the Frenchmen, Loubet, Rousseau, Combes, Hanotaux, and Delcassé, always supporting the Russians, and occasionally coming forward on their own account as Protectors of Roman Catholic Missions in the East! And the astute Americans are

there—McKinley, Choate, Conger, Roosevelt, and Hay, asserting themselves for the first time as an Asiatic Power.

British citizens have a pressing and immediate interest in the competing aims of all these national groups. It behoves us to note how the unquestioned superiority, almost tantamount to monopoly, which was the prerogative of our country in lands beyond the seas one or two generations ago, is now contested and encroached upon on every side by powerful rivals.

It is conceivable that time was when China might have become the absolute property of this country. When we went to America in days of old, did we not seize the best portion of that continent within the north temperate zone for our heritage, colonise it, and make of it a New England? And when we went to the Cape, did not all South Africa become part of the British Empire? And when we went to India, did we not appropriate the entire Hindustan peninsula from the crests of the Himalayas to Point de Galle? And did we not enter into possession of a whole continent in Australia and New Zealand, the area of which is over 3,000,000 square miles? And, better still, no rival can truthfully gainsay that all these achievements were for the good of humanity.

It concerns us now to observe the altered position which we occupy, when a vast and fruitful section of the world is about to be thrown open to trade. America, eager and expectant, is on the ground before us, watching from her new base in the Philippine Islands. Quaint and playful Japan has developed into a giant able to handle the hugest implements of modern warfare with unsurpassed skill. She is there, as the coming world-power, claiming her right at the cannon's mouth to a predominant voice in the settlement of China. Young men can remember when

America and Japan were negligible quantities in such matters.

And, more portentous still, Germany too is there, awake, rejuvenated, no longer terrified by fear of French invasion. And France herself is still at the front, competing with us, thwarting us, and shutting us out. And, lastly, Russia—that inchoate mass of dumb humanity with whom we never had to reckon in the colonising days of old.

Even the smaller nations of Europe are there who never contemplate drawing the sword—the Belgians with their railways and syndicates, the Danes and Norwegians, and our ancient rivals, the Dutch, who have long ceased to be a fighting power. Nay, the Austrians, almost shut out from the sea, and even the Italians, have found their way to China, when the possibility of partition opens up visions of new territory and increased trade.

Events move rapidly nowadays, and the United Kingdom is confronted with a constantly-increasing competition which compels its citizens to take stock from year to year of the decisive occurrences of their own day. This book is an honest attempt at a connected narrative of facts, and it will have accomplished no unworthy purpose if it helps to stimulate the interest of British citizens in the rights and duties of the British Empire in Eastern Asia at this critical conjuncture.

BOOK I

1898–1904

"We have a warning example in China. . . . The modern *régime* of public opinion is, in an unorganised form, what the Chinese educational and political systems are in an organised; and unless individuality shall be able successfully to assert itself against this yoke, Europe, notwithstanding its noble antecedents and its professed Christianity, will tend to become another China."—JOHN STUART MILL.

MAP OF EASTERN ASIA
SHOWING CHINA AND ITS VASSAL STATES, SIBERIA, & JAPAN, &c.

Scale: One Inch = 1350 English Miles.



[To face p. 1.

CHAPTER I

The Chinese Empire—Korea—Chino-Japanese War of 1894–1895—Treaty of Shimonoseki—Intervention of Russia, France, and Germany.

IN January, 1898, the *Cologne Gazette* informed its readers that a treaty of alliance between Great Britain and Japan was then in contemplation. It is safe to say that out of the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom, 39,990,000 of them did not pay the slightest attention to the report; and that, of the small portion of our people who noticed it, not one in ten believed it to be true.

The war between Japan and China, which had ended in the treaty of Shimonoseki, in April, 1895, had been one continuous campaign of victory for Japan. The immediate cause of hostilities had been a rebellion in Korea, a country in whose affairs China and Japan claimed an equal right to interfere.

But, over and above her interest in Korea, China had a long outstanding score to settle with Japan. The adoption of Western civilisation in Japan—that is to say, the abolition of feudalism, the encouragement of secular education, the establishment of representative government, the disestablishment of religion—had incensed China against her progressive neighbour, and the revolt in Korea only supplied the

necessary pretext for avenging a host of treasured wrongs.

The kingdom of Korea had been from time immemorial one of a number of independent, yet quasi-tributary, states, which fenced off China Proper on all sides from the hordes of "foreign devils" who inhabited the rest of the world, and towards which China had assumed, from time to time, the position of a suzerain power. But, owing to internal dissensions in China itself, many of these quasi-tributary states had, on various occasions, declared their independence, and in recent years some of them had become the appanages of other empires.

Manchuria, the home of the Imperial dynasty, with its area of 362,310 square miles and its population of 7,500,000; Mongolia, covering the vast extent of 1,288,000 square miles, with a roving population of 2,000,000; Turkestan and Jungaria, with an area of 600,800 square miles and a sparse population of 1,180,000, were in the year 1898 practically subject to Russia, though still virtually within the Chinese Empire. China Proper stands in the same relationship towards Manchuria and Mongolia—its tributaries on the north-east and north-west—as England does to Scotland. The hardy denizens of these highlands of Eastern Asia had been accustomed to make lawless forays upon the fertile lowlands of China. The Mongols, under Jenghis Khan, conquered China in the thirteenth century, and founded a Mongol dynasty of Chinese Emperors. The Manchus subdued China in the seventeenth century, established the dynasty which still reigns at Peking, and, as a race, occupy a position of superiority over the native Chinese similar to that held by the Normans over the Saxons in England during the twelfth century.

Burmah, another of China's feudatories, with an

area of 168,550 square miles, and a population of 9,000,000, had, at the date of the opening of this history, become incorporated with the British Empire, though still paying a decennial tribute to China; Nepaul, with its area of 54,000 square miles and population of 4,000,000, was independent, but also paid a tribute to China, despite its close touch with India. Tibet, with an area of 651,500 square miles and a population of 6,000,000, had recently fallen to some extent under our influence, but, though independent, was still a portion of the Chinese Empire. Annam, Tonking, Cochin China, and Cambodia, comprising an area of 363,000 square miles and a population of 18,000,000, belonged to France; and Ham Nghi, ex-Emperor of Annam, resided at Algiers on a pension of £1,200 a year, to be increased to £3,200 on marriage.

Siam, with its broad area of 244,000 square miles and a population of 5,000,000, was independent, being shut off from China by the British and French colonial empires.

And lastly, Korea, with which we are most concerned at present, having an area of 82,000 square miles and a population of 12,000,000, had asserted her independence by concluding treaties, on her own initiative, with Japan in 1876, with the United States in 1882, and with Great Britain in 1883.

The areas of the quasi-tributary states mentioned amount to the huge total of 3,793,110 square miles, with a population of 64,000,000; while the area of the sacred soil of China Proper is 1,353,350 square miles, with a population of 400,000,000, or eleven times the area and ten times the population of the United Kingdom; an estimate which gives to China and her vassals no less than 5,300,000 square miles of the earth's surface, and 464,000,000 of its inhabitants.

In other words, the Empire of China and its tributary

states used to cover an area which exceeded that of all Europe by 1,763,377 square miles, while its population was 100,000,000 in excess of the population of Europe during the greater part of the nineteenth century.

Those figures enable us, in some measure, to realise the vastness and magnificence of Ancient China, and to understand the well-founded pride and exclusiveness of successive dynasties of Chinese Emperors and their officials. Enjoying, as they did, a civilisation which was entirely indigenous; believing that mankind was first created in China, and at a specific date, 2,267,000 years before the time of Confucius, who lived from 551 to 475 B.C.; tracing the corporate existence of their country back—in nebulous, but more or less intelligible, history—over that enormous period, the bare conception of which implies, in itself, a high state of civilisation; possessing the richest lands, the greatest rivers, and the most numerous, as well as industrious, population in the whole world; it is no wonder that the Chinese believed that China was commensurate with the world itself, and that foreigners outside the scope of celestial civilisation were merely "devils."

China proper possessed so many peculiar advantages of soil and climate, as compared with the neighbouring countries, that it was a pardonable vanity in the Chinese patriots to claim for it certain supernatural or celestial attributes. In the first place, China was a paradise enclosed by a wall of such magnitude as to constitute one of the wonders of the world. Inside this wall there are in North China 250,000 square miles of land—that is to say, an area more than double that of the British Isles—covered with a peculiar kind of earth called Hwang Too, or Yellow Earth, and which we call "loess," which is to all intents and purposes a permanent top-dressing of manure. The

Emperor of China was called Hwang Te, or Yellow Ruler, probably because he was proprietor of the loess, the most highly-prized possession of the agricultural country over which he reigns. This loess will grow crop after crop without being exhausted, and is so friable that it requires very little labour to cultivate. Besides the loess area there is the great delta plain of the Hwang Ho, or Yellow River, 700 miles in length by 150 to 500 miles wide, which consists entirely of rich alluvial soil. In addition to these special regions there are vast areas of extremely fertile, arable soil in the great level areas from the Hwang Ho to the Yangtse Kiang, and again in the immense southern region below the Yangtse. The great artificial river called the Yun Ho, or, as we call it, the Grand Canal, runs north and south for seven or eight hundred miles from Hangchow in the south to Peking in the north, through a land which used to be in the highest state of cultivation. In a country like England, where the agricultural industry has fallen into such decay, it seems hardly conceivable that purely agricultural districts in China can support, as they do, over three thousand persons to the square mile.

For several centuries the Japanese had been on terms of intimate relationship with the peninsula of Korea, which is only separated from them by the island-dotted Strait of Korea, and is practically a continuation of Japan attached to the mainland. Japan being more thickly populated than the United Kingdom, and possessing only the same area, requires room for expansion in Korea, which is thinly populated by a degenerate race, but which is nevertheless a useful country, and provides Japan with a considerable portion of her food supply. So far back as 1592 A.D., fifty years before the present Manchu dynasty began to

reign in Peking, an extremely modern date in the history of China, the Japanese invaded Korea, but were defeated by a large Chinese force which came to the assistance of the Koreans. A Chinese fleet cut off the retreat of the Japanese, and Japan was compelled to sue for peace.

Five years afterwards, in 1597, the Japanese, having bided their time, once again invaded Korea, defeated the Chinese troops, destroyed the Chinese fleet, and then suddenly returned to Japan without annexing Korea.

In 1885 a convention was concluded between China and Japan, Li Hung Chang and Count Ito being the plenipotentiaries, in which it was practically acknowledged that both had equal military rights in Korea, and that neither should send troops into it without notifying the other. In the month of May in that year we occupied Port Hamilton, a port in a group of islands at the southern extremity of the Korean peninsula, on the grounds that we required a naval base north of Hong Kong, and as a countermove to the advance of Japan and Russia. But we evacuated the position in February, 1887, in consequence of an assurance given by Russia that she would not interfere with the integrity of Korea. In the interval from 1887 to 1894 the condition of Korea continued unsatisfactory. The Government, which was exceedingly corrupt, had become entirely vested in the Bin family, of which the Korean Queen was a member, and frequent insurrections took place. The people of Korea were, in fact, reduced to a condition of slavery, and the administration was only maintained in power by the co-operation of the Chinese Government, which was always ready to come to the aid of the dominant faction.

In 1894 the Bins, after their usual custom, applied for

Chinese assistance to suppress a serious rebellion. In May that year the rebels, known as the Tong Haks, defeated the Korean troops, and on the 6th of July a Chinese brigade, consisting of 2,500 men, set out for Korea. In the notice of the despatch of the expedition, which was given to Japan, China—acting, it is alleged, under Russian inspiration—had claimed Korea as a "tributary state" of the Chinese Empire. Japan protested that she had equal rights with China in Korea, and sensibly suggested that a joint Chino-Japanese expeditionary force should be made up to quell the disturbance; and that when peace had been restored a joint commission of investigation should decide as to the administrative reforms necessary to ensure lasting tranquillity.

The Empress-Dowager of China, of whom much will of necessity be written in this history, sympathised with the family of the Queen of Korea; and, hating Japan, as a pervert from Oriental civilisation, and no better than a "foreign devil," the Chinese autocrat rejected the Mikado's honourable proposal. Five thousand Japanese troops were immediately landed at Seoul, the capital of Korea. China, on her part, despatched reinforcements of troops to assert her sovereignty by sea and land. Three Chinese men-of-war, convoying a transport with 1,200 troops on board, encountered three Japanese cruisers, and a naval battle took place, in which the Chinese were utterly defeated, one of their men-of-war being captured, the second wrecked, the third disabled and put to flight, and the transport sunk, having refused to surrender. This naval victory, which occurred on July 25, 1894, was followed up by several triumphs over the Chinese troops on land, notably those at Ya-shan and Phyong-yang. On September 17th a great naval battle was fought at the mouth of the Yalu River, in which five

Chinese ships were sunk and the remainder put to flight. The Japanese then captured the powerful fortified naval stations of Talien-wan (Dalny), Lu-shun-kow (Port Arthur), and Wei-hai-wei. At Wei-hai-wei a decisive naval battle was fought, in which three of the largest Chinese vessels having been sunk, and all their torpedo-boats captured or destroyed, the rest of the Chinese fleet surrendered, and its commander, Admiral Ting, committed suicide. The entire Liao-Tong peninsula, where so much of the fighting in the Russo-Japanese war has taken place, was then occupied by the Japanese. Kaiping was captured by General Nogi; old Niuchwang by General Nodzu; Port Arthur by General Oyama—soldiers of whom much will be written in succeeding chapters.

The Chinese sued for peace, and the treaty of Shimonoseki was concluded on April 17, 1895, by Li Hung Chang and Marquis Ito.

The provisions of this treaty were :—

1. China acknowledged the complete independence of Korea.

2. China ceded the following territory to Japan: (*a*) the Liao-Tong peninsula from the mouth of the Liao River; (*b*) the island of Formosa and the Pescadores.

3. China agreed to pay an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels (£30,000,000) to Japan.

4. China consented to the occupation of Wei-hai-wei by Japan, until the indemnity should have been paid.

If the Japanese victory of 1894–1895 had taken place in the eighteenth, or in the early part of the nineteenth century, it would have resulted in the substitution of the Mikado for the ruling Manchu Emperor in Peking, just as the Manchus themselves had usurped the place of the Ming dynasty in the seventeenth century, and as the founder of the Mings—a Chinese labouring man—

had driven the last of the descendants of Jenghis Khan from the throne in the fourteenth century. Had such been the Mikado's destiny, it is difficult to say whether Japan would have materially changed China; for, though numerous revolutions and a score of dynasties have come and gone since the days of Yaou, in 2356, B.C., China remains practically unchanged; one of the richest of the world's gardens; a country which fashions the human beings who reside within her borders into a startling homogeneity of intellect and appearance. It is said by authorities on the subject that Europeans who have lived a number of years in China, become like Chinamen, the resemblance extending not only to the sphinx-like mould of the countenance, but, in many cases, to the obliquity of cast in the eyes. Nay, it has been remarked that Westerns who spend the greater part of their lives in China seem to think after the inscrutable methods of the Confucian, and take a Chinese view of most things spiritual and material—a noteworthy phenomenon when we bear in mind the initial dissimilarity of the Chinaman and the European. The earth, air, and water of China, more than those of any other country, seem to fix their imprint so indelibly upon man, no matter what his race may be, that he becomes, as it were, a part of China, like the Hwang Too, the tea-plants, the palms, and the mulberry trees. If, after the war, the Mikado had become the Emperor of China, it is possible that Japan might thenceforth have taken a secondary place in his thoughts, and he and his dynasty might have regarded China as their native land.

But, if Japan's victory by land and sea did not result in winning China over to Western civilisation, they assuredly dispelled the illusion known as the "Chinese Terror," which had so impressed the popular imagination at this side of the globe, that China was

regarded as ultimately invulnerable in warfare; and people believed that she could over-run Asia, and probably Europe also, whenever her rulers decided that it would be to their advantage to do so.

When the Shimonoseki treaty was finally ratified, Russia, Germany, and France presented a joint note to Japan, "recommending" her not to occupy the mainland territories which had been ceded to her; and, on their advice, China consented to increase the war indemnity to 230,000,000 taels (£34,500,000) if Japan surrendered the Liao-Tong peninsula. The Japanese, yielding to superior force, consented, and received a guarantee that Liao-Tong would not be occupied by Russia, Germany, or France, or surrendered to any other Power. The Mikado, in promulgating the terms of the treaty of Shimonoseki to his subjects, also published a rescript, in which he reiterated his devotion to the cause of peace and progress; gave undeserved credit to Russia, Germany, and France, for the same lofty motives as those by which he himself was inspired; and said he "yielded to the dictates of magnanimity and accepted the advice of the three Powers."

Russia then guaranteed a loan of £15,000,000 at 4 per cent., which was issued in Paris, to enable China to pay the first instalments of the war indemnity; and the Manchu officials regarded the Tsar as the saviour of China.

Japan immediately entered upon a policy of reform in Korea, but found herself still thwarted by the Queen and the Bin faction, who relied upon Russian support. The King's father was under the influence of Japan, and the Japanese endeavoured to place him on the throne, but without success. In 1896 a joint protectorate by Russia and Japan was established in Korea, Japan thereby conceding to Russia the position which

she had wrested from China by the war of 1894–1895. If one may paraphrase a saying of Napoleon's, "It was magnificent, but it was not business!" The Korean King, who was under Russian influence, having accused all his ministers of high treason, took up his residence at the Russian Legation in Seoul!

During the year 1897 the rivalry between Russia and Japan in Korea continued. Each of the competing Powers maintained a force of 200 guards at Seoul; but the Japanese gained the ascendancy, and became the ruling power. The Russians advised the King, who had returned to his palace and proclaimed himself an Emperor, to dismiss the English Commissioner of Customs, Mr. McLeavy Brown. The King agreed to do so, and appointed M. Alexieff, a Russian, as his Financial Adviser with right to nominate a new Commissioner of Customs. The British fleet appeared at Chemulpo, and Mr. McLeavy Brown was retained in his post and M. Alexieff dismissed. A new protocol was concluded between Russia and Japan, under which Japan withdrew her opposition to Russia's designs in Liao-Tong and Manchuria, and Russia agreed to give Japan a free hand in Korea; but Russia negotiated a lease of Deer Island, opposite the important Korean port of Fusan.

Those who had been persecuted by the Bin family were not prepared to forgive and forget; and the Empress of Korea was assassinated in the Summer Palace.

Japan, in fulfilment of her agreement, withdrew her troops from Port Arthur and the Liao-Tong peninsula in the winter of 1897, while these negotiations about Korea were impending; and, while Japan busied herself about Korea, Russia proceeded to make her own of Manchuria.

The Mikado and his statesmen had shown them-

selves as magnanimous as they were prudent; and the gratitude of the nation took the practical form of a personal gift of 20,000,000 yen (£2,000,000), which was unanimously voted to the Mikado by the Diet "as a memento of the signal successes achieved in the war," which "were mainly due to the Imperial virtues."

China, the greatest Oriental enemy to progress, had been defeated; but Russia, the chief Occidental foe to freedom and civilisation, still remained to be faced—Russia, the prime mover in the conspiracy against Japan after the treaty of Shimonoseki.

Confident in her own strength and integrity, Japan bided her time and prepared herself for every eventuality. Her victory over China had marked her out as a Coming Power, destined to occupy a supreme place in the politics of Asia. It has been said that "coming men" seldom arrive, but the aphorism has not proved true of Japan; for, before the close of this narrative, it will be amply manifest to the reader that the Coming Power of 1895 has actually arrived and taken her place as one of the world's master-forces.

CHAPTER II

German seizure of Kiao-Chau—Anglo-Chinese agreement—Dissatisfaction in England—Sir M. Hicks Beach on "the open door"—Port Arthur and Dalny leased to Russia—Russian aggression in Manchuria.

IT was under such circumstances that Japan was forced to evacuate the Liao-Tong peninsula after the war of 1894–5. But she continued to occupy Wei-hai-wei, until May, 1898, when the final instalment of the war indemnity was paid in London by a single Bank of England cheque for £11,008,857, handed by the Chinese envoy to the representative of Japan—a striking testimony to Eastern confidence in the commercial integrity of Great Britain.

During the six months preceding that pleasant incident, that is to say, from November, 1897, to May, 1898, many transactions, as high-handed as they were dishonourable, had been taking place in China. The German Emperor was the first to show that a living German dog was better than a dead Chinese lion. Two German missionaries had been murdered in Shantung province in November, 1897, and apparently without consulting the other Powers—assuredly without consulting Great Britain—the German admiral ordered the Chinese commander at Kiao-Chau to evacuate that important port within forty-eight hours, landed six hundred men from his battleships, and took pos-

session of the Chinese barracks. A demand for reparation for the murder of the missionaries was then presented to the Chinese Foreign Office or Tsung-li-Yamen. Every concession asked for was granted; but the Germans refused to evacuate Kiao-Chau, and eventually coerced China into giving them a ninety-nine years' lease of the bay and harbour and 117 square miles of territory. This lease was given on the 5th of January, 1898.[1]

In the interval from November to January, Lord Salisbury had made some ineffectual protests; but the Germans gained their point completely, and not only maintained their territorial footing on the sacred soil of China at the entrance to the Straits of Pechili; but, as we shall see, also claimed a paramount influence over that of all other foreign powers, in the large province of Shantung—"their Shantung," as they now call it.

If it is ever possible to repose absolute credence in the business utterances of diplomatists, France and Russia had not been consulted by Germany. M. Hanotaux enigmatically said "the steps taken by the Germans are very serious." Count Mouravieff said, "he had been rather surprised when he heard of the occupation of the bay in question."

Admiral von Diedrichs was provided with his plan of campaign by the Kaiser, and issued the following proclamation in Chinese:—

"Be it known to all concerned that I have come in obedience to the commands of my Sovereign, his Imperial Majesty the German Emperor, who has instructed me to land at Kiao-Chau Bay at the head of my forces, and seize the said Bay and all the islands and dependencies thereof. Avoid resisting whatever

[1] Kiao-Chau Bay Correspondence, No. 1 (1898). Presented to Parliament, April, 1898.

the German authorities shall decide to do hereafter. You should calculate the exigencies of the case, and you will see that you are too weak to resist."[1]

Jenghis Khan's despatch to the Kin Emperor of China in 1214 A.D. may have been the precedent on which this inspired proclamation of Admiral von Diedrichs' was founded. It will be remembered how the great Mongol's triumphal march eastward had been completed, and the army of the victorious conqueror had halted on the extremest cliff of the Shantung promontory, quite close to Kiao-Chau. And Jenghis Khan sent an envoy to Peking with the following message to the Emperor: "All your possessions in Shantung and the whole country north of the Yellow River are now mine with the solitary exception of Peking. By the decree of Heaven you are now as weak as I am strong, but I am willing to retire from my conquests; as a condition of my doing so, however, it will be necessary that you distribute largess to my officers and men to appease their fierce hostility."

The German conqueror showed no desire to evacuate, but we shall learn presently, from the proceedings of Count Waldersee's German army in China in 1900, that he entertained no objection to largess. The Kin Emperor sent Jenghis a peace-offering consisting of two princesses, 500 youths and maidens, and 3,000 horses. Perhaps, if an offering on a similar scale, but more in accordance with the usages of modern society, had been presented by the Emperor Kwang Su, in 1898, it would not have proved unacceptable.

Speaking of the Kiao-Chau seizure in the Reichstag, Herr von Bulow said: "The best pledge for the future is, in our view, the permanent presence of German ships of war and of a German garrison in Kiao-Chau

[1] *The Times*, January 6, 1898.

Bay. The might of the German Empire is thus constantly and visibly exhibited to the local and provincial Chinese authorities, as well as to the population, which, it is to be hoped, will not again forget that any injury done to a subject of the Empire will not be unavenged."[1]

Prince Henry of Prussia was despatched to China by the Kaiser with great ostentation; and so ingrained is our British *savoir faire*, that a grand ball was given in his honour at Hong Kong.[2] The pushful German prince proceeded to Peking; and on May 15, 1898, was received in audience by the Emperor and Dowager-Empress "on terms of equality," being the first European ever so honoured.

It is not easy to believe Count Mouravieff's statement that the German occupation of Kiao-Chau surprised him. The Germans had seized Kiao-Chau on the 17th of November, and on the 20th of December following, while the negotiations between China and Germany were proceeding, three Russian men-of-war anchored outside Port Arthur, which had just been evacuated by the Japanese.

Two days afterwards, on December 22nd, Sir Claude Macdonald, our representative at Peking, telegraphed to Lord Salisbury that "the Chinese Government had given permission for the Russian fleet to winter at Port Arthur." Next day, December 23rd, Count Mouravieff told our representative at St. Petersburg that "the Russian ships had gone to Port Arthur only owing to a certain difficulty in keeping more than a certain number of ships of war in Japanese ports at one time."[3] The Russians were building up a powerful

[1] *The Times*, January 25, 1898.
[2] *Ibid.*, March 30, 1898.
[3] Port Arthur and Talien-wan Correspondence, No. 1. Presented to Parliament, April, 1898.

fleet in the Pacific, so as to deprive Japan of her command of the sea, and in winter-time they did not want to keep the ships idle in ice-bound Vladivostock.

At the same time Russia gave an explicit undertaking to the Japanese Government that "Port Arthur had been lent to Russia by China only temporarily as a winter anchorage." Japan, suspecting no dishonesty, accepted the assurance.

In addition to the loan of £15,000,000 issued in Paris in 1895, on the Russian guarantee, China had borrowed a sum of £16,000,000 in 1896. But more money was now required to pay off the final instalments of the war indemnity, and Russia offered China a 4 per cent. loan at 93, guaranteed by the Russian Government. The Tsung-li-Yamen[1] approached us to ascertain if the money could be obtained in England on more favourable conditions.

On December 26th Count Mouravieff again spoke to our representative at St. Petersburg about Port Arthur. "Vladivostock," he said, "remained as heretofore their centre in the Far East and the headquarters of their land and sea forces, so that the mere fact of the Russian squadron wintering at Port Arthur made no change whatever in the situation."

On January 8, 1898, Lord Salisbury telegraphed to Sir Claude Macdonald that we should be prepared to pay Japan the outstanding instalment of the war indemnity, about £12,000,000: (1) "if China agreed to pay us 4 per cent. in gold, net, for fifty years for principal and interest, which would extinguish the loan"; (2) if we got the requisite control of the Chinese revenue; (3) if we got the right to build a railway from the Burmese frontier to the Yangtse Valley; (4) if we got a guarantee that no territory in

[1] Chinese Foreign Office.

the Yangtse Valley would be ceded to any other Power; (5) if Talien-wan were made a treaty port; (6) if greater freedom of internal trade was conceded.

Four days after this proposal, that is to say, on January 12th, the Russian Ambassador in London called on Lord Salisbury, and had the temerity to inform the English Premier that "the presence of two British warships at Port Arthur had produced a bad impression in Russia." Lord Salisbury replied that our warships "had a treaty right to enter." But he apologetically added that "as a matter of fact they had been sent thither by Admiral Buller without any order from home, and that he believed in the ordinary course they would soon move to some other anchorage."

By a noteworthy coincidence, on the same day at Paris, M. Hanotaux informed the British Ambassador that if a loan were granted to China on the sole guarantee of England, "there would be a good deal of jealousy in other quarters."

Four days after this, on the 16th of January, the Chinese Government announced to Sir Claude Macdonald that they practically consented to England's terms for the loan, with the exception of the condition that Talien-wan should be opened as a treaty port. "Russia had protested," the Tsung-li-Yamen informed the British minister, "against its opening in the strongest manner, and had warned them that they would incur the hostility of Russia by doing so." Sir Claude Macdonald wired home to this effect, and added: "Tsung-li-Yamen had previously seemed to welcome the idea of opening Talien-wan, the advantages of which they see clearly, but they are evidently greatly frightened by Russian threats."

Mouravieff again spoke to our representative at St. Petersburg about Port Arthur: "The anchorage of

the Russian Squadron there was merely a temporary measure, but, after the wintering of the vessels there, the Chinese Government had given Russia the prior right of anchorage—*le droit du premier mouillage.*"

On the 17th of January Lord Salisbury withdrew his demand that Talien-wan should be made a treaty port. The Chinese seemed willing to take the loan from England; and Germany did not overtly oppose its being placed with us.

British merchants were now beginning to question the advantages of Lord Salisbury's diplomacy in China, and were naturally alarmed at the progress of Russia and Germany in the Far East. The Premier therefore felt compelled to make a declaration of his policy, and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, was deputed to deliver the message of the Government in a speech at Swansea on January 17, 1898. Having explained that our exports of several articles had decreased, owing to the United States tariff, he went on cheerfully to point out that "when one door was closed, another door was opened;" and he added emphatically that "the door must not be closed against us in China."

"We think of China," he said, "with no selfish interest. We desire to open it and its hundreds of millions of toiling, patient, and hard-working people to the benefit of the trade of the world. We do not regard China as a place of conquest or acquisition by any European, or other Power. The Government are absolutely determined, at whatever cost, even—and I wish to speak plainly—if necessary at the cost of war, that that door shall not be shut." [1]

This was what was called at the time "the policy of the open door" in China. A considerable section of the press, which had been patriotically chafing under

[1] *The Times*, January 18, 1898.

our continuous set-backs in China, was loud in its approval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech. One newspaper declared that "never since the days of Canning had anything been heard like it." But the deliverance does not appear to have influenced any of the Powers to any appreciable degree. It assuredly did not act as deterrent on Russia.

On the 19th of January, Count Mouravieff spoke to Sir Nicholas O'Conor, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, "of the action of the British gunboats in entering Port Arthur." Two days afterwards Sir Claude Macdonald learned from the Tsung-li-Yamen that "active steps to thwart the loan were in progress;" and the Chinese increased their demand, insisting that the amount of the loan should be £16,000,000—a sum which Russia was prepared to advance.

Matters rested so for a week; and on the 28th of January the Russian Ambassador again called on Lord Salisbury and criticised the visit of two British war vessels to Port Arthur. Lord Salisbury again was so conciliatory as to point out that "the only British vessel there was the *Iphigenia*, that she would be leaving in a few days, and that her visit was by the orders of the Admiral, issued at his own discretion, and not under the directions of the Government."

The French Government were also embarrassing the Tsung-li-Yamen, protesting especially against the clause for the opening of the railway from Burmah to the Yangtse Valley, contained in the proposed Anglo-Chinese agreement. We withdrew our men-of-war from Port Arthur.

Some days afterwards it was proudly announced at St. Petersburg that "British men-of-war had received orders to quit Port Arthur immediately, in consequence of Russian representations." And, the news being at once cabled to Peking, Sir Claude Macdonald reported

that it produced "a most injurious effect" there. A few days afterwards, January 31st, the Yamen informed Sir Claude Macdonald that "they greatly appreciated the generosity and goodwill displayed" by Great Britain "in offering to help them by guaranteeing a loan. . . . They considered the financial terms very generous, and the concessions such as they could grant, and they would gladly accept our offer if left to themselves; but Russia had used such threats that they saw no way out of the difficulty but coming to some arrangement with Japan, and borrowing neither from England nor Russia." The Yamen also told Sir Claude Macdonald "that the French minister had again been to see them and had spoken very violently," &c.

On March 7th, *The Times* announced that the Russians were about to get a lease of Port Arthur and Talien-wan on the same terms as Germany had got a lease of Kiao-Chau. Lord Salisbury first learned the intelligence from the great newspaper, and he wired to Sir Claude Macdonald for confirmation of the report, and suggested to him that "it seemed desirable for us to make some counter-move." Next day Lord Salisbury discovered from *The Times* that "Russia demanded sovereign rights over Port Arthur and Talien-wan; and the right to construct a railway from the Trans-Siberian line *viâ* Mukden, to Port Arthur;" and "had threatened that, in the event of non-compliance within four days, Russian troops would advance into Manchuria."

On the same day, March 8th, Mouravieff told the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg that Russia "had no alternative but to demand a cession, both of Talien-wan and Port Arthur, as one without the other was of no use to them." Five days afterwards Mouravieff told our representative that "he had received the

Emperor's orders that Talien-wan would be regarded as an open port, but that Port Arthur would be regarded as a strictly military port."

It was in vain for Sir Nicholas O'Conor to protest that "the possession of a very strong military position like Port Arthur altered in a most important degree the position of things in China." In vain also Lord Salisbury wrote a despatch in which he said: "Questions of an entirely different kind are opened if Russia obtains control of a military port in the neighbourhood of Peking. Port Arthur is useless for commercial purposes, its whole importance being derived solely from its military strength and strategic position, and its occupation would inevitably be considered in the East as a standing menace to Peking and the commencement of the partition of China."

Lord Salisbury's despatch was too late. If he had ordered Admiral Buller to maintain the British men-of-war at Port Arthur, "where they had a treaty right to enter," instead of having so needlessly apologised for their presence, his protest might now have been effective.

On March 28th, *The Times* informed the British public that M. Pavloff, the Russian *Chargé d'affaires* at Peking, had just signed a separate agreement with China, under which Russia obtained a lease of Lu-shun-Kou, now known to the world as Port Arthur, as a fortified naval base; and of Talien-wan, now known as Dalny, as a partially open port, with the right of constructing a railway to both ports. The Chinese garrisons were withdrawn and their places taken by Russian troops.[1]

Lord Salisbury read the news in his morning paper; and, on the same day, M. de Staal wrote him an official letter to notify him that "in virtue of a con-

[1] *The Times*, March 28, 1898.

vention, signed on the 27th of March at Peking, between the Russian Representative and the members of the Tsung-li-Yamen, duly authorised for that purpose, Ports Arthur and Talien-wan, as well as the adjacent territories, have been ceded to Russia in usufruct by the Chinese Government."

It was by such diplomacy that Russia ousted the Japanese and acquired possession of the Liao-Tong peninsula for herself.

The triumph for Russia was indeed as great as it was bloodless. The only loss involved was the sacrifice of truth and honour, virtues which are of small account in Muscovite diplomacy. The Tsar expressed to the Emperor of China his "sincere pleasure" at the conclusion of the agreement of which he prophesied that it "would undoubtedly serve to strengthen the bonds of friendship existing for centuries past between their great neighbouring empires." The Russian Minister, who delivered the God on Earth's[1] message to the Son of Heaven,[2] thus describes its reception: "I was permitted to ascend the steps of the throne, as distinguished from all former audiences, in order to deliver directly from hand to hand, to his Majesty, the telegram of the Emperor. In taking the telegram from my hands, the Emperor of China slightly raised himself from the throne."

Russia then sent a notification to Japan that she had obtained "the usufruct of Port Arthur and Talien-wan," which had so recently been conquered in honest warfare by the Mikado's soldiers. Japan made no protest, being busy with her projects in Korea, though her troops still occupied Wei-hai-wei.

By the terms of the lease, which was for twenty-five years from 1898, Russia agreed that Talien-wan

[1] Title of the Tsar.

[2] Title of the Emperor of China.

should be open to trade, "except in one part of the bay, in which only Russian and Chinese ships will be allowed." But it was stipulated that "no vessels, war or merchant, of any nation but Russia and China, should be allowed access to Port Arthur."

In August, 1898, the Tsar issued an imperial order, declaring that Talien-wan should be a free port, "after the completion of the railway line as far as the harbour" of that place, and thereby silenced all objections to his Manchurian Railway. The preamble of this document discloses the vastness of Russian ambition: "Owing to the great possessions of Russia in Europe and Asia," it began, "it has been possible with God's help to effect a *rapprochement* between the peoples of West and East. Through the friendly attitude of China we have succeeded in obtaining our historic aim, having obtained the use of two Chinese harbours, Talien-wan and Port Arthur, with large territory whereby an outlet for the great Siberian railway to the Yellow Sea has been secured. Thanks to the wise decision of the Chinese Government, we shall, through the railways in course of construction, be united with China—a result which gives to all nations the immeasurable gain of easy communication and lightens the operations of the world's trade."[1]

Russia was to be the highway between East and West, the world's greatest carrier, its dominions commensurate with those of Jenghis Khan and his successors, extending from the Baltic to the Yellow Sea.

As the Mongol conqueror held Southern Russia in his grip in the thirteenth century, so now the Adjuster of the Earth[2] was to hold China in subjection.

With reference to the amount of territory conceded

[1] Official Correspondence, Port Arthur and Talien-wan.

[2] Another of the Tsar's titles.

with the ports, it is to be observed that while the land to be given us with Wei-hai-wei was accurately delimited, permission was given to Russia to place her boundary in "accordance with her requirements" and "at whatever distance may be necessary."[1]

It is obvious that such an arrangement was destined to eventuate in the annexation of Manchuria and the reduction of the Chinese Government at Peking, which is only two hundred miles from the Manchurian frontier, to a position of complete subservience to Russia. The Russians now acted as if they already regarded Port Arthur and Dalny as two Russian townships, and as if Manchuria were a Russian province, in the same sense of the word as Bessarabia, Kherson, or Taurida. They built entirely new towns at Port Arthur and Dalny. They constructed branch railways to both places, putting them in direct connection with the great Trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostock. They fortified Port Arthur until there was nothing to be found equal to it for military strength in all the East; and it was compared at the outset of the Russo-Japanese war to "seven Sevastopols."

The two ports were acquisitions of the highest value to Russia. Both are ice-free at all seasons, and the climate is as mild as that of the Crimea. Before the Russians took possession of Port Arthur the Chinese had erected quays and dredged the land-lock harbour, which is four miles long by about one and a half wide, and only 350 yards wide at its entrance.

The Japanese justly regarded the Liao-Tong peninsula as their property by right of conquest which had been stolen from them by Russia. But although they looked with distrust and protestation on the fortifying

[1] Agreement concluded January 3, 1898.

of Port Arthur, the pretentious development of Russia's commercial plans at Dalny, and her practical subjection of all Manchuria, it is doubtful if they would have gone to war had they been left in quiet enjoyment of their advisory position in Korea. They soon saw, however, that with Russia paramount in Manchuria, and Germany predominant in the great province of Shantung, the Japanese tenure of Korea would not be worth many years' purchase. Therefore, during the six years from 1898 to the outbreak of the war in February, 1904, Japan has been silently and undemonstratively waiting an opportunity to regain that which she had been induced to surrender under duress.

COUNT KATSURA. | COUNT LAMSDORFF.









LI HUNG CHANG.
(Photo: Russell & Sons.)

MARQUIS ITO.
(Photo: W. & D. Downey.)

"*Count Katsura said: 'With us the war means life and death. We are prepared to sacrifice the last man and the last yen,'* p. 300. '*Count Lamsdorff gave us to understand that Russia was simply negotiating to prevent further disturbances in Manchuria,*' p. 103.

"'*I strongly advise that if he could do so with safety to himself,' continued Lord Salisbury, 'Li Hung Chang should go to Peking,*'" p. 68. "*In 1885 a convention was concluded between China and Japan, Li-Hung Chang and Count Ito being the plenipotentiaries,*" p. 8.

[*To face p.* 29.]

CHAPTER III

England leases Wei-hai-wei—Our undertaking to Germany—Anglo-German loan—Anglo-Chinese agreement—Franco-Chinese agreement—Concession to Japan—Comparison of Russian, English, German, French, and Japanese spheres of influence in China in 1898—The war in the Soudan and South Africa.

WHILE Russia and Germany were thus aggrandising themselves at the expense of China, Lord Salisbury was endeavouring to secure some advantages for this country amidst the general scramble for spoil.

On April 1, 1898, China definitely agreed to give us a lease of Wei-hai-wei "on the same terms that Port Arthur had been leased to Russia," our tenure to last "until Russia ceased to occupy the Liao-Tung peninsula." The port of Wei-hai-wei was not of our selection. The first suggestion that we should occupy it came from "a Chinese minister," in an interview with Sir Claude Macdonald on February 25th. "The Chinese Government," he said, "would offer a lease of Wei-hai-wei to the British, if they thought their request would meet with a favourable response." Lord Salisbury rejected the proposal. "At present," he said, "the British Government aimed at the discouraging of any alienation of Chinese territory. The discussion of the lease of Wei-hai-wei would accordingly be premature."

The "Chinese minister" knew that at the moment he made the suggestion to our representative Russia had forced China to alienate Port Arthur and Talien-wan, a fact of which Lord Salisbury was in complete ignorance, and which, as we have seen, he only discovered from *The Times* of March 7th following. Wei-hai-wei was at that time occupied by the victorious Japanese troops, who were holding it for the Mikado, as a security for the unpaid portion of the war indemnity. In offering Wei-hai-wei to us, under these circumstances, China was astutely giving us an interest in hastening the payment of the balance of the war indemnity and the consequent departure of the Japanese. We had no policy apparently; and we accepted the suggestion to lease Wei-hai-wei only when we heard of Russia's *coup* through the columns of *The Times*. Then it dawned upon us, in the words of Lord Salisbury, that "it was desirable to make some counter-move," and that "the best plan would perhaps be, on the cession of Wei-hai-wei by the Japanese, to insist on the refusal (*i.e.*, first offer) of a lease of that port on terms similar to those granted to Germany."

On April 2nd, the day after China's agreement with us for a lease of Wei-hai-wei, Germany demanded an explanation and an undertaking from us; on the grounds, presumably, that Wei-hai-wei was close to Kiao-Chau and in the province of Shantung, the recently-acquired German sphere of influence.

Mr. A. J. Balfour happened to be acting for his uncle, who was absent from duty through illness, and he gave Germany a written assurance, the terms of which, having been practically dictated by Germany herself, were as follows: "England formally declares to Germany that, in establishing herself at Wei-hai-wei, she has no intention of injuring or contesting the rights and interests of Germany in the province

of Shantung, or of creating difficulties in that province. It is especially understood that England will not construct any railway communication from Wei-hai-wei, and the district leased therewith, with the interior of the province of Shantung."

While, therefore, Germany got a port and 117 square miles of territory, and the whole surrounding province of Shantung as a sphere of influence, and while Russia got two ports and the entire country of Manchuria, we only got an isolated *pied-à-terre* by the sufferance of Germany, and without right of communication with the interior!

But our difficulties were by no means at an end. Russia now approached Japan, the country whom she had defrauded of the best fruits of her well-won victory, and made the audacious proposal to the Government of the Mikado that, on completion of the payment of the war indemnity, and the consequent evacuation of Wei-hai-wei, the Japanese should hand over Wei-hai-wei to China and not to England! But Japan declined to entertain the proposition.

Negotiations were meantime proceeding for an Anglo-German loan to China, instead of the exclusively English loan which China would have been willing to accept if she had not been deterred from doing so by Russia, backed up by France.

In the course of these negotiations China made an agreement with us: (1) Not to alienate the Yangtse Valley to any Power, whether by lease, mortgage, or cession; (2) to open the port of Nanning; (3) to alienate no territory in Kwangtung and Yunnan to any foreign Power; (4) to permit a British syndicate to construct a railway from Shanghai to Nanking; (5) to extend the boundaries of Hong Kong.

Four new ports—namely, Ching-wang-toa, San-tuao, Yochow, and Hunan—were also opened to trade.

On the 1st of May, 1898, an agreement was signed at Peking for an Anglo-German loan to China of £14,000,000 at 4½ per cent.; and to this loan, jointly arranged for by a British and a German banking firm, there seems to have been none of the bitter opposition in the face of which the exclusively English loan at 4 per cent. had collapsed.

It was on the 5th of May, under the pleasant circumstances before mentioned, that the outstanding balance of the war indemnity was paid in London by China to Japan. The Japanese, true to their word, evacuated Wei-hai-wei, and on the 21st of May the bluejackets of H.M.S. *Narcissus* took possession of the port and hoisted the British flag. Our lease of the place was perfected and signed on the 1st of July following, and, under it, we acquired a belt of territory ten miles wide, all round the bay, as well as the islands in the bay, as against a belt of territory thirty-two miles wide from every point of Kiao-Chau Bay, which had been granted to Germany, in addition to paramount influence in the province of Shantung. If Lord Salisbury may be said to have had a policy, that policy was the avoidance of war. His conduct to our opponents, especially Germany, was always reasonable and moulded upon events as they occurred.

France, which had been at Russia's back all through the proceedings, did not go unrewarded. By an agreement of April 12, 1898, she obtained (1) a lease of Kwang-Chau as a coaling station; (2) the right to construct a railway from Tonking to Yunnan; (3) an undertaking from China not to alienate land in the provinces of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, and Yunnan—thus cutting off Burmah from direct communication with China, and revoking China's implied concession to ourselves.

During the progress of these negotiations, or spolia-

tions, Japan requested that no territory in the Chinese province of Fuh-Kien should be alienated to any foreign Power except Japan; and the request was granted.

If we compare the provinces mentioned, we find that Shantung, which is the German sphere, is in many respects the most important province in China. It is situated at the north-east corner of China, and, projecting in the form of a peninsula, separates the Yellow Sea from the Gulf of Pechili. It runs co-terminous with the southern boundary of the province of Chi-li, in which stands Peking, the capital of China. It is watered by the river Hoang-Ho, which, for the last 250 miles of its course, is entirely in the province. The area of Shantung exceeds that of England by over 5,000 square miles, and its population is 38,247,900, more than six millions in excess of the population of England and Wales at the last census, being 683 persons to the square mile.

The three provinces over which France has asserted her right to influence are in South China. Kwangtung is a coast province containing the city of Canton and the British colony of Hong Kong. If any European power had a right to obtain that province as a sphere of influence, it would appear to have been ourselves who had been so long and so successfully settled within its borders. It is a most important province, 99,970 square miles in extent and having a population of 31,865,251. At its most southern point is situated the important island of Hainan, which is included in the province. The territory leased to France, including the port of Kwang-Chau and two islands, are in the province of Kwangtung.

Kwangsi is also a coast province lying west of Kwangtung and adjoining Tonking. It is large but sparsely populated, being 77,200 square miles in extent

and having a population of only 5,142,330. The famous Li-Hung-Chang was the Viceroy of both these provinces, his official title being the Viceroy of the Two Kwangs.

Yunnan is an inland province of immense size, co-terminous with Tonking and Burmah, and extending north to the borders of Tibet. Its area is 146,680 square miles, or 26,000 square miles greater than the areas of Great Britain and Ireland, and it has a population of 12,324,574. Its possession by France would deprive us of a possible overland route to the Yangtse Valley from India or Burmah.

Fuh-kien, the province coveted by Japan, is poor in soil but rich in minerals, such as coal, silver, lead, and iron. It is in the south-east of China, directly opposite Formosa, from which it is separated by a strait seventy miles wide. Its area is 46,320 square miles, and its population 22,287,540, and it contains the important port of Amoy.

What, it may be asked, is the admitted sphere of British influence? The answer will have to be gleaned from subsequent chapters, when the Germans will be found denying that we have any special sphere of influence, and successfully forcing us to abrogate any rights acquired by us in the Yangtse Valley under the agreement just concluded with China. But let us not anticipate the course of events. If by the term Yangtse Valley we mean the geographical valley of the Yangtse and its tributaries, then our sphere of influence should cover an area of 550,000 square miles; but if we take it to mean the area supplied by the Yangtse ports, the areas is 669,000 square miles. The foreign imports of these ports in 1897 amounted to £12,500,000, as against £16,000,000 for all the rest of China.[1] The names of the principal of them are well known:

[1] Report by Colonel Browne, Military *attaché* at Peking, 1899.

Shanghai, Suchow, Hangchow, Chinkiang, Nanking, Kinkiang, Wi-hu, Hankow, and Ichang; at each of which a British man-of-war will be found stationed during the Boxer Rising in 1900—to be dealt with in another chapter—Ichang being 1,200 miles inland from the mouth of the river. If we manage to maintain a pre-eminence in that vast region, there should be a fruitful field for British enterprise in store for us in China; and, as the Yangtse Kiang rises in Tibet, we may yet dominate the great river from its source to its mouth, a distance of 2,900 miles.

Those demarcations enable us to forecast broadly what would have been the ultimate end of China, if a partition had become an accomplished fact in 1898—a native administration at Peking under Russian suzerainty, governing Chi-li and some interior provinces; while the vast regions mentioned would have been directly governed by the European Powers and by Japan.

In explanation of the inadequate part we appear to have played in China in 1898, it may be reasonably advanced that trouble was brewing in South Africa, though the British public little divined how near the struggle was; and none of our authorities foresaw how gigantic would be the impending appeal to arms. Lord Salisbury had long experience and exceptional facilities for acquiring information; but he took no adequate steps to grapple effectually with the enemy in case of war. Mr. Chamberlain had not his chief's experience in the devious ways of diplomacy; and, despite his enthusiasm and sincerity, he seemed as decidedly "out of his element" in the Colonial Office as he used to be manifestly "in his element" at the Local Government Board, or the Board of Trade, during the Gladstone Government of 1880–5. He has had to bear the penalty of popular distrust

which always attaches to the minister responsible for a costly and unfruitful war; and, considering Lord Salisbury's ripe experience, the personal punishment inflicted on Mr. Chamberlain cannot be said to have erred on the side of clemency. But we were not concerned with these things in 1898, when public interest was centred in Egypt rather than in South Africa.

While Sir Herbert Kitchener was endeavouring to establish order in the valley of the Upper Nile and thereby ensure the permanent peace of Lower Egypt, the political agents of Russia, co-operating with Captain Marchand, were fomenting trouble to engage his attention. M. Vasloff, Russian Councillor of State, arrived at Abyssinia and was welcomed with ostentatious cordiality by the Emperor Menelik. M. Leontieff, a Russian merchant, sent to Menelik "seven railway trucks of presents," amongst which was "a precious holy image of St. George the Victorious," which, before being sent off, was blessed and sanctified by the celebrated thaumaturgic priest, Father John of Cronstadt. But our suspicions were aroused when "the English customs authorities seized some dangerous war material, bought by M. Léontieff, which was about to be shipped to Africa."

About this time, also, a member of the Board of Censors at Peking accused the whole Tsung-li-Yamen of being in Russian pay, and charged Li-Hung-Chang with having accepted a bribe of 1,500,000 taels from Russia.

CHAPTER IV

The Chinese Emperor—The Dowager Empresses as Regents—The Emperor advocates reform—*Coup d'état* at the palace—Kwang-Su medically examined—Suppression of the reform movement—Spread of anti-foreign feeling.

EVEN the most casual observer cannot fail to have been struck by the self-evident helplessness of China throughout all the proceedings narrated in the foregoing chapters. And, as the differences between Japan and Russia directly concern us in proportion as they affect the fate of China, we shall now briefly consider the position of the Chinese Emperor, Vicegerent of Heaven, an autocrat in whom is vested *de jure* the supreme dominion over the soil and all living things within the borders of his vast empire, save only "the spirits of the land," which are to be numbered by thousands of millions, and which he cannot appease.

Kwang-Su, the present Emperor of China, the ninth sovereign of the Manchu dynasty, was born in 1872, and is therefore thirty-three years old. He is the son of Prince Chun, who was the seventh son of the Emperor Tao-Kwang, who reigned from 1821 to 1851. Tao-Kwang was succeeded by his son the Emperor Hien-Feng, who reigned from 1851 to 1861. Hien-Feng's principal wife, Tszu-An, bore no male child; so, when Hien-Feng "ascended on high," he was

succeeded by his only son, Tung-Chi, the child of his secondary wife, Tszu-Hszi. As Tung-Chi was only four years old when he became Emperor, the Government was vested in the two Empresses as Regents.

The Empress Tszu-Hszi was a Manchu of lowly origin. When a child she had shown extraordinary smartness and acumen. She was pretty and vivacious, and, having reached the regular age, she presented herself for inspection by the purveyors to the Imperial harem, into whose sacred precincts none but Manchus are overtly admitted. Her loftiest ambitions were realised, and, out of the host of candidates, she was amongst the fortunate ones selected for admission to the palace.

Given beauty, sprightliness, brains, and ambition, there is, perhaps, no career on earth which opens up such boundless possibilities as that of a favourite in an Eastern harem. The girl who was yesterday a gutter-sparrow may to-morrow become ruler of the autocrat of hundreds of millions of people. She finds her victim in a mood when he willingly becomes her slave, and, when once he has allowed her to fetter him, the maintenance of her power becomes a question of brains and management. Eunuchs and purveyors to the harem can be flattered and bribed, so that all danger of a more attractive rival may be staved off until the imperial victim has become bound in toils from which there is no escape. It was so in the case of Hien-Feng, to whom Tszu-Hszi bore a son, and over whom she wielded a predominant influence to the last.

Tszu-Hszi was by no means the first favourite of the imperial Chinese harem who exercised sovereign power and dictated what was to be the succession to the throne. In 650 A.D. the Empress Woo-How ruled the empire during the life of her husband,

Kaou-Tsung; and, at his death, in 683 set aside the legitimate heir, her own son, Chung-Tsung, and successfully governed the country until her death in 705. On his mother's death Chung-Tsung ascended the throne, but is said to have been poisoned by his wife, who desired to follow the example of Woo-How. Most of the Emperors during the eighth century were under the influence of the harem, mere slaves in the hands of the favourites and the eunuchs.

Even the decisions of the son and successor of the virile Jenghis Khan, the great Emperor Ogdai, were set aside by his harem. His legitimate successor was repudiated, and one of the harem favourites, Toliekona, was appointed Empress and reigned for a period of four years—1241–1245 A.D.—when she resigned and appointed her own son, Kwei-Yew, who reigned until 1248.

Tszu-Hszi was, therefore, well provided with precedents. She now exercised a commanding influence over her son, Tung-Chi, during a minority lasting twelve years. Her conduct has been painted in the blackest colours. She has been accused of murder and every description of basest intrigue. Some writers have not hesitated to charge her with the corruption and murder of her son Tung-Chi. Certain it is that the young Emperor died suddenly and mysteriously in 1875, two years after he had attained his majority, and in the eighteenth year of his age. It is said he left a youthful widow who was *enceinte*, but of her or her offspring nothing was ever heard afterwards.

Immediately upon Tung-Chi's decease the two Empresses were reappointed Regents. Tung-Chi's mother having been the predominant partner in the regency during his long minority, and being a woman of uncommon ability and boundless ambition, and many years younger than Tsu-An, she now asserted

authority in the selection of a successor to her son. And it was by her direction that the infant son of Prince Chun, a babe of three years old, was nominated Emperor.

Technically the selection appears to have been wrong; for by Chinese law the heir must be actually younger and of a younger generation than the person he succeeds. Now, though the baby selected for the throne was actually younger than the deceased Emperor, he did not belong to a younger generation, for Tung-Chi's father and this babe's father were brothers, and Tung-Chi and this babe were first cousins, and, therefore, of the same generation. Therefore, since Tung-Chi was not his ancestor, the babe-Emperor could never discharge the rites of ancestor-worship, the prime duty of a Chinese Emperor, to the Spirit of his predecessor, who would thereby be defrauded of his due honour. But the Empresses paid no heed to this. They had again climbed to power; and if the title of the new Emperor contained a flaw, by so much the more would he be in the power of the Regents.

The reigning title, Kwang-Su, or "A Succession of Glory," was given to the infant Emperor, and he began his reign. In 1881 Tsu-An died of heart disease, and thereupon Tszu-Hszi became the sole Regent; and she wielded as absolute a sway over China as ever Queen Elizabeth herself wielded over England. In 1887 Kwang-Su came of age. It is said that when he went to the Temple of Heaven for the first time to celebrate the rites of ancestor-worship, the prejudice against his defective title was so keen that a censor committed suicide in the young Emperor's presence before the altar, by way of dramatic protest against the disqualification attaching to the imperial celebrant of the rites.

Tszu-Hszi, having been born in 1834, was at this date—1887—fifty-three years old; she felt in excellent health, and was by no means prepared to give up the sceptre without a struggle. Having selected the Emperor herself, and having reared him under her own eye, with a view to ensuring his subservience, she continued to discharge the duties of the regency until 1889, when Kwang-Su took up the sole control.

No greater misnomer could have been selected for the present reign than that of Kwang-Su, "A Succession of Glories"; for the term of the reigning Emperor's sovereignty has witnessed only a succession of tumult, humiliation, and loss for the Celestial Empire.

After the war with Japan in 1894–5 the Emperor, being in his twenty-third year, showed some perception of the fact that all was not well with China; and in the year 1898 he began to associate himself with the party of reform in Peking. Noting the extraordinary progress made by Japan, he favoured the adoption of European civilisation in his own empire.

But the Empress Tszu-Hszi had to be reckoned with, for she was still a power behind the throne, and had always been a firm upholder of the *ancien régime* in China. During her first regency, from 1861–1872, she had had many a brush with the European Powers. It was during that regency that Gordon, the Englishman, got command of the Chinese troops and put down the Taiping rebellion. While she was ruler no relaxation of court etiquette was possible; and it was only when her son, the Emperor Tung-Chi, came of age that the foreign ministers at Peking obtained the right of audience, or, as it was called, the privilege of gazing on the Sacred Countenance, a concession which she would never have granted. It was during her second regency, after the death of Tsu-An, that the French were beaten in Tonking; that Central Asia,

as far west as Kashgar and Yarkand, was restored to its allegiance to China; that Russia had to give way to China and forego her indemnity of 5,000,000 roubles arranged for in the Treaty of Livadia. Like our own Queen Elizabeth, she possessed the art of selecting capable agents for the execution of her projects—men like Tso-Tsung-Tang, Li-Hung-Chang, and the Marquis Tseng.

Whatever fault we may be inclined to find with what is called "petticoat government," it is seldom indeed that a man educated from childhood by a woman is found to be totally bad. Kwang-Su was educated by Tszu-Hszi; but it must be said for the Empress, whatever may have been her lust for power, that her pupil showed himself to be on the side of progress and reform.

The Emperor Kwang-Su began to use his vermilion pencil to put his visions of a regenerated China into writing. "Imperial decrees, intended to launch China on the path of reform, continue to appear," wrote Sir Claude Macdonald, in September, 1898, "though there are few signs of any of them taking effect."[1] Count Ito visited Peking in the same month, and reported that the Emperor was in favour of the reforms introduced by Japan.

Amongst the decrees thus issued by the Emperor was one making the throne more accessible to the lower officials, the outcome of which would be the emancipation of the sovereign from the thraldom of the ring of higher officials.

It is a time-honoured rule of the Chinese Constitution—if a Constitution can be said to exist under an autocracy—that the Emperor must live in strict seclusion, and receive all information as to the business of the Empire from the hands of certain high officials,

[1] Despatch from Peking, September 17, 1898.

and that he must, in turn, entrust the execution of his decrees to those same officials. He cannot hear or see things for himself, he cannot witness the execution of his own orders. The Emperor has no private property, no personal wealth like the European sovereigns, but is entirely dependent on the moneys sent in by the viceroys and governors of provinces who occupy positions of quasi-independence. He may dismiss or degrade those officials, but he remains subject to their successors.

The Board of Ceremonies, relying on the protection of the Dowager-Empress, disobeyed the decree giving freer access to the throne, and refused to transmit a memorial to the Emperor which had been sent in by a secretary. The Emperor heard of it and dismissed the six head officials of the Board. He issued a fresh decree ordering that memorials were to be presented as they came in, "it being of the highest importance, in the present critical state of public affairs, that all such communications should be examined as soon as possible."

On the same day the Emperor issued a decree "calling attention to the advantages of Western methods, and inveighing against degenerate officials and conservative ministers." He felt he was being thwarted by a power behind the throne. He made a moving and pathetic appeal to "his subjects"—as if they could by any possibility hear his appeal. He said he wanted them to know that they "could depend on their Prince," and called on them to make China powerful by working for reforms with "united minds." He extended the privilege of memorialising the throne "to practically every soul in the Empire."

The Emperor had wakened up to a sense of his responsibilities and was taking an interest in his business. It was rumoured that he had seized the

person of the Dowager-Empress. But, though the report was false, Tszu-Hszi and the high officials, alarmed for their own safety, took strong measures. The army was as yet in their hands. On the night of September 20, 1898, they took possession of the palace of the Emperor, and secured the sacred person of Kwang-Su, who, unknown to the outer world, became a prisoner in their hands. They were in a position to keep their action secret, for the Emperor is bound to live in seclusion, and his imprisonment would excite no outside comment. Having no private property, he was in a position of entire dependence on the high officials, and he had no influential friends. Kwang-Su had offended the officials; and, of all the inmates of the palace, he only received support from a section of the eunuchs, those high priests of the harem having divided their forces so as to ensure the favour of the winning side for some section of the profession. Tszu-Hszi, without an instant's hesitation, ordered the eunuchs who were suspected of supporting Kwang-Su to be scourged to death in the courtyard of the palace. What passed within the precincts of the palace must necessarily remain a mystery; but it is clear that Kwang-Su was in the power of his enemies. He was assuredly terrorised and probably threatened with death by the leading Manchus, headed by the Empress-Dowager. And the result was that a decree was signed by him and published on September 22, 1898, announcing that "the control of the Government by the Emperor had been made subject to the advice of the Empress-Dowager." The military mandarins, the sinecure-holders, the censors, the bannermen, and the eunuchs had triumphed. The procuration and promulgation of this degree constituted, in fact, a *coup d'état;* for by virtue of it the reigning sovereign was deprived of the autocracy and the Empress Tszu-Hszi

was made Regent for the third time, at the age of sixty-four. Manchus were substituted for Chinese in many of the higher offices. Even Li-Hung-Chang, the greatest of the Chinese, was removed from Peking, though he was a staunch friend of the Empress-Dowager.

Four days later a decree was issued cancelling the previous decrees of the Emperor. The leader of the party of reform—or, as they styled themselves, the Protectors of the Nation—a Chinese scholar named Kwang-Yu-Wei, called by his followers "The Modern Sage," escaped from Peking and found refuge in Hong Kong. But his brothers and five other reformers were publicly executed on September 28th. The populace sided with the reactionaries, and such was the anti-foreign *animus* displayed in the streets of Peking, that guards had to be obtained to protect the legations. The Emperor is said to have "bowed weakly to the storm"; and Tszu-Hszi, as the representative of the high Manchu officials whose privileges were jeopardised by the proposed reforms, was triumphant.

In October detachments of European troops, of various nationalities, were brought into Peking to defend the legations. Disturbance was rife and trouble was anticipated by those on the spot. The Emperor's death was reported—a rumour which was perhaps intended to be only the prelude to his assassination. Sir Claude Macdonald informed the Tsung-li-Yamen that "should the Emperor die, the effect amongst the Western nations would be most disastrous to China." This message probably saved the life of Kwang-Su.

The fugitive reformer, Kwang-Yu-Wei, confirmed the view that the movement for reform was "the outcome of the struggle for power between the Emperor and the Empress-Dowager. . . . The

Empress-Dowager and the Manchu party were seriously alarmed for their own safety." All thought of reform was now abandoned. "The grain tribute was to be resumed, with all its wasteful expenditure. The right of memorialising the throne was again limited to high officials. The examinations were placed upon their old footing, that is, were based entirely upon the Chinese classics. All Chinese newspapers were ordered to be suppressed and their writers punished. The recently-established Board of Trade, Manufactures, and Agriculture was abolished."[1] And, finally, "there were persistent rumours of the Empress-Dowager proceeding to extreme steps with regard to the Emperor."

Sir Claude Macdonald suggested to the Yamen "that a certificate as to the Emperor's health should be given by a foreign doctor." This was acceded to, and Dr. Dethève, of the French Legation, having visited the Emperor, pronounced that "his Majesty was suffering from Bright's disease, though there was no immediate danger from it."

The Empress Tszu-Hszi now took a step unprecedented in the annals of China. With a view to conciliating the European Powers, she held a reception at the palace on October 15th, at which she received in audience the wives of all the foreign representatives, as graciously as if she had been herself a European queen, born and bred in an atmosphere of liberty and enlightenment. Sir Claude Macdonald says that the Empress-Dowager "made a most favourable impression by her courtesy and affability," distributing presents on all sides, beaming smiles on her European sisters, and exclaiming, "All one family, all one family!" The Government of China is based on the family as a unit. Each paterfamilias is an autocrat in his own house, the high priest of his own circle, and performs

[1] Despatch of Sir C. Macdonald, October 11, 1898.

the rites of worship on behalf of the family. The Emperor himself is the paterfamilias of the whole nation, and, in that capacity, is the high priest and mediator between heaven and earth. Tszu-Hszi now meant that the Europeans were members of the great Chinese family, of which she was the *de facto* head. But, despite this profession of goodwill, the anti-foreign feeling was spreading fast all over China. Mr. Fleming, a British missionary, was murdered in South Kweichow in November, 1898.

At the beginning of 1889 Germans were assaulted in the streets of Tientsin; and, the *animus* against foreigners having showed itself in various parts of the province of Shantung, Herr von Bulow declared that it was Germany's duty to "effectually safeguard *the weighty interests* which she possessed in the Chinese Empire." In March, Sir Henry A. Blake complained that piracy was becoming increasingly frequent in Chinese waters adjacent to Hong Kong.

In April, the British Government, anticipating trouble, entered into an agreement with Russia, by virtue of which we bound ourselves not to seek any railway or other concessions north of the Great Wall, and Russia undertook not to seek for these advantages in the Yangtse region. In May, anti-foreign disturbances were reported from Central Senchuan. Archdeacon Wolfe telegraphed to the Church Missionary Society that "urgent strong measures" were necessary in Kienning. In Sir Claude Macdonald's absence Mr. Bax-Ironside sent in a protest to the Tsung-li-Yamen, on August 3, 1899, stating that "the robbers and pirates of Kwangtung are overrunning the province with the boldest effrontery."

These ominous rumours were brought to a climax by the first notification of the appearance of the Boxers. Viscount Gough sent an explanation of the

uncouth term to Lord Salisbury: "The followers of the sects of the Red Fist and the Great Knife are in a state of revolt in Shangtung against the administration and the people in that province; and are engaged in plunder and rapine in many places."*

In November, the Dowager-Empress, in contravention of her amicable professions to the European ladies, issued a secret edict to the governors of maritime provinces inciting them to resist "the aggressions of foreign Powers," and exhorting the populace "to preserve their ancestral homes and graves from the ruthless hands of the invader" by a general uprising.

During the year 1899 Russia and Japan continued to oppose and checkmate each other in Korea. On the whole, the balance of advantage remained with the Japanese, who, amongst other successes, obtained control of the railway between Chemulpo and Seoul.



CHAPTER V

Kwang-Su's remarkable decree appointing an heir-apparent—Brief sketch of the Manchu dynasty of Chinese Emperors.

IT cannot be denied that these outbreaks which marked the year 1899 were a not unnatural consequence of the continuous humiliation of China in 1898, beginning with the high-handed conduct of the Germans at Kiao-Chau, and followed, as that display of brute strength had been, by the threats and constant intriguings of Russia, and closing with all the territorial concessions to the other Powers which have been set forth in the third chapter.

The year 1900 opened badly. On January 4th Sir Claude Macdonald reported the murder of Mr. Brooks, a British missionary, at Fei-Ch'eng, in the province of Shantung. The Emperor Kwang-Su and the Empress-Dowager expressed their grief; and an Imperial edict was issued pointing out that, under existing treaties, all nations may propagate their religions in China.

"For several months past," continues the despatch, "the northern part of the province of Shantung has been disturbed by bands of rebels." And it was added that "an organisation known as the Boxers had attained special notoriety."

Amidst all this popular disquiet, what had become of the reforming Emperor, Kwang-Su, who had been placed under "the advice" of the Empress-Dowager,

as we have seen, in September, 1898? The answer is that he had completely collapsed, and had degenerated into a mere puppet in the hands of the Empress Tszu-Hszi. What a pathetic spectacle this young autocrat presents for the consideration of humanity—this Son of Heaven, twenty-six years old, on whose sacred countenance it is sacrilege for mere mortals to gaze—this monarch of 407,337,305 human beings who adore him as a god, this sovereign by his own divine right! Alas! no pauper in a London poorhouse, no prisoner on remand in a London gaol, is as great a slave as he is. His brain, which has been galvanised into action for a moment, had gone to sleep again. He has lost his will-power, has ceased to be a man, and is compelled, as it were, to sign his own death-warrant.

The following Imperial decree, issued on January 24, 1900, paints for us the complete effacement of the young reforming Emperor, who told his people, in September, 1898, that "they could depend on their Prince," and had implored them to work with "united minds" for the regeneration of China. The decree, it was asserted, was written "by the Emperor's own pen."

It bears evidence, indeed, of having been composed by a timid, well-bred man—a gentleman as innocent of guile as Don Quixote or Cervantes himself, one who sees the outer world through spectacles prepared for him by his female tyrant, and by "the degenerate officials and conservative ministers" whom he had denounced with such spirit in 1898.

Nowhere in the records of fact or fiction is to be found a more heart-moving description of a gentleman in adversity penned by himself. Kwang-Su chivalrously takes all the blame upon himself and attributes whatever good fortune has fallen to his lot to "Her Gracious Majesty's anxious toil by day and by night, never laid aside for rest or leisure." He cheerfully, or

at all events resignedly, accepts his own obliteration; and "in reverend obedience" to the Empress-Dowager appoints his second cousin, P'u-Chun, a youth of fourteen years, to be the Prince Imperial and the adopted son of the Emperor Tung-Chi; as if he himself, whose reign is designated Kwang-Su, or "the Succession of Glory," had already ceased to exist on earth, and had, in the flowery euphuism of China, "ascended on high" and "become a guest of Heaven."

How gracefully Kwang-Su makes way for this boy, the great-grandson of the Emperor Tao-Kwang, who reigned from 1821–1851, and who was the father and predecessor of the Emperor Hien-Feng, Tszu-Hszi's husband, Kwang-Su himself being the grandson of the same Emperor Tao-Kwang!

"When at a tender age we entered into the succession to the throne," begins this Imperial Decree by the Emperor's own pen, the highest form of legislation known in China, "Her Majesty the Empress-Dowager graciously undertook the rule of the country as Regent, taught and guided us with diligence, and managed all things, great and small, with unremitting care, until we ourself assumed the government. Thereafter the times again became critical. We bent all our thoughts and energies to the task of ruling rightly, striving to requite Her Majesty's loving-kindness, that so we might fulfil the weighty duties entrusted to us by the late Emperor Mu-Tsung-Yi (Tung-Chi).

"But since last year we have suffered from ill-health; affairs of State have increased in magnitude and perplexity, and we have lived in constant dread of going wrong.

"Reflecting on the supreme importance of the worship of our ancestors and of the Spirits of the land, we therefore implored the Empress-Dowager to advise us in the government. This was more than a year

ago, but we have never been restored to health, and we have not the strength to perform in person the great sacrifices at the altar of Heaven and in the temples of the Spirits of the land.

"And now the times are full of difficulties. We see Her Gracious Majesty's anxious toil by day and by night, never laid aside for rest or leisure, and with troubled mind we examine ourself, taking no comfort in sleep or food, but ever dwelling in thought on the labours of our ancestors in founding the dynasty, and ever fearful lest our strength be not equal to our task.

"Moreover, we call to mind how, when we first succeeded to the throne, we reverently received the Empress-Dowager's decree that, as soon as a prince should be born to us, he should become the heir by adoption to the late Emperor Mu-Tsung-Yi (Tung-Chi). This is known to all the officials and people throughout the Empire.

"But we suffer from an incurable disease and it is impossible for us to beget a son, so that the Emperor Mu-Tsung-Yi (Tung-Chi) has no posterity, and the consequences to the lines of succession are of the utmost gravity. Sorrowfully thinking on this, and feeling that there is no place to hide ourself for shame, how can we look forward to recovery from all our ailments?

"We have, therefore, humbly implored Her Sacred Majesty carefully to select from among the near branches of our family a good and worthy member, who should found a line of posterity for the Emperor Mu-Tsung-Yi (Tung-Chi), and to whom the throne should revert hereafter.

"After repeated entreaties Her Majesty has now deigned to grant her consent that P'u-Chun, son of Tsai-Yi, should be adopted as the son of the late Emperor Mu-Tsung-Yi (Tung-Chi).

"We have received Her Majesty's decree with

unspeakable joy, and in reverend obedience to her gracious instructions, we appoint P'u-Chun, son of Tsai-Yi, as Prince-Imperial to carry on the dynastic succession.

"Let this decree be made known to all men."

What a picture this young Emperor gives of himself! First of all, a gentleman to his finger-tips, "in constant dread of going wrong," he repudiates the insinuation that the supremacy of the Empress-Dowager was forced upon him. It was he who "implored" her to advise him in the government. If he were robust in health he might take the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, but, alas! he has not "the strength to perform in person the great sacrifices in the temples of the Spirits of the land."

Imagine him, sitting in the seclusion of the palace, watched by the spies of Tszu-Hszi on every side, seeing himself surrounded by the Spirits of the deceased Emperors.

There is the ghost of Shun-Chi, King of Manchuria, the first sovereign of the present Manchu dynasty of Chinese Emperors. The Manchu army had entered China under Ama-Wang, to put down a rebellion at the request of the feeble Emperor Tsung-Ching, the last of the Ming dynasty. That was in 1644, at the time when the great civil war was in full swing in England. Ama-Wang refused to return to Manchuria, and his victorious troops proclaimed his little nephew, Shun-Chi, Emperor of China.

Behold Shun-Chi now, as with angry gaze his spirit scowls upon his degenerate descendant, Kwang-Su. He seems to say, "I despised these Russians before whom you shiver, I sent back the Moscovite ambassador in 1656 without an audience, for I would not admit him into my presence unless he kowtowed! But you——!"

And see, there are the three heavenly virgins who

dwell at the foot of the Great White Mountains. Behold them bathing in a crystal lake amidst the snow-covered peaks; and lo! a magpie flies overhead, and from its beak drops a blood-red fruit on the youngest virgin, which she ate, and forthwith conceived, and in due course brought forth a son, whom they called Ai-Sin-Ghioro, which, being interpreted, means "The Golden Family Stem," and who was the founder of the Manchu Imperial family.

And, more appalling still, there is the ghost of Kang-He, son of Shun-Chi, a renowned Emperor, the Manchu Julius Cæsar, as famous for his learning as for his feats in arms, who reigned gloriously for sixty years, from 1661 to 1721, who consolidated the Chinese Empire from the Straits of Malacca to the northernmost point of Manchuria, who added Tibet to the Empire as a tributary state, and, above all, who was the father of twenty-four sons. Is it not hard for our poor, impotent Kwang-Su to sit easy in so great a presence? All his predecessors stand arrayed against him, like so many accusers, in an unbroken chain of succession from father to son.

Shun-Chi!

Kang-He!

Yung-Ching, who reigned peacefully from 1721 to 1735!

Keen-Lung, who invaded Burmah and Cochin China; who added Turkestan to the Empire; who defeated the Moslems in Kansuh; who conquered the Ghoorkas; who established the suzerainty over Nepaul; who received Lord Macartney at his court at Jehol; who invaded Formosa; and who, nevertheless, found time to write poetry and prose, and encourage Chinese literature; and whose poem on the defeat of the Ghoorkas may be read in the Summer Palace by Kwang-Su, if he has the mind to do so; Keen-Lung,

who reigned for sixty years, and abdicated in 1795 in favour of his fifteenth son, Kea-King!

Kwang-Su trembles at the ghost of the mighty Keen-Lung. But his sympathies go out to Kea-King, in whose reign there were many troubles, though, undoubtedly, no such humiliation as that which China suffers in the reign of Kwang-Su.

Kea-King's ghost seems to say, "Lo! Tsait'ien, you who call your reign Kwang-Su! Do you not know what I did to the Englishman, Lord Amherst, sent on an embassy to me in 1816, in the year after their much-vaunted victory of Waterloo? I would not receive him unless he performed the kowtow. I dismissed him with ignominy from my palace the day he arrived at Peking after his long journey! But you——!"

Kea-King was a vicious man, a slave to every sensual whim and caprice; but he was an Emperor, a tyrant, a power on earth! He has been dead since the year 1820; but his Spirit is there still, there in the private chamber in the Summer Palace, with poor Kwang-Su.

And, worst of all, perhaps, there is the ghost of Tao-Kwang, grandfather of Kwang-Su, through whom he has succeeded to the throne, the great-grandsire of little P'u-Chun, the Prince Imperial. He, too, had trouble, for it was in his reign the war about opium with England took place, when the English general, Sir Hugh Gough, captured Canton, Amoy, Ningpo, Shanghai, and a number of other cities, and compelled China to cede Hong Kong to Great Britain, and pay an indemnity of 21,000,000 dollars. Tao-Kwang wanted to save his people from the opium drug which the English merchants were bringing into the country in thousands of tons. He seized 20,283 chests of opium at Canton and destroyed them. He would have paid for the damage, but the English Government declared war upon him, and the English fleet bombarded the

Bogue forts and captured them. And Tao-Kwang, too, was a pleasure-seeker, and had "ascended on high" in the year 1850; but his Spirit is still here in the seclusion of the palace.

Hien-Feng is staring at him, though he died in 1861. Hien-Feng may sympathise; for, though he spent most of his days in the voluptuousness of his harem, he, too, knew what it was to live in "times full of difficulties," for he had to make large concessions to the English when they invaded China under Lord Elgin and Sir Hope Grant in 1858.

And, lastly, Tung-Chi, to whom Kwang-Su cannot discharge the elaborate rites of ancestor-worship, and to whom no posterity has yet been raised up! How full of spirits the air seems! The harem is not so full of houris. Oh, the terror of those sacrifices unperformed! "No comfort in sleep or food, but ever dwelling in thought on the labours of our ancestors!" Oh, the remorse of young Kwang-Su, the High Priest of God, the Teen-Tse, or Son of Heaven, the father of four hundred millions of mortals, the one mediator between them and Heaven!

"We have not the strength to perform the great sacrifice at the altar of Heaven." This altar of Heaven consists of three circular terraces placed one on top of the other, the circle at the base being about 210 feet in diameter, the middle circle 150 feet, and the topmost circle 90 feet. "The Emperor kneels in front of the tablet of Shang-Tis (the Supreme Being or Heaven), and faces the north. The platform is laid with marble stones, forming nine consecutive circles; the inner circle consists of nine stones, cut so as to fit with close edges round the central stone, which is a perfect circle. Here the Emperor kneels, and is surrounded first by the circles of the terraces and their enclosing walls, and then by the circle of the horizon. Round him on

the pavement are the nine circles of as many Heavens, consisting of nine stones, then eighteen, then twenty-seven, and so on in successive multiples of nine till the square of nine, the favourite number of Chinese philosophy, is reached in the outermost circle of eighty-one stones. He then seems to himself and to his court to be in the centre of the universe, and, turning to the north, assuming the attitude of a subject, he acknowledges in prayer, and by his position, that he is inferior to Heaven, and to Heaven alone." [1]

Close by stands a furnace of green porcelain, in which a bullock, two years old and without blemish, is sacrificed as a whole burnt-offering.

A round of such sacrifices are proceeding from one end of the year to the other, the position of the Emperor corresponding technically to that of the Roman Pope when all Europe believed in him and when he possessed temporal power, and only differing slightly from the present position of the Tsar of Russia. He is a religious ruler, the sole Vicegerent of Heaven. The greatest of all the Imperial sacrifices is that made on December 21st, the date of the winter solstice; and it will be noted that the decree containing the confession of impotency was issued in the month following that great ritualistic fixture, namely, in January, 1900, just when a second period of sacrifice was approaching.

Kwang-Su had dreams of translating the best European literature into Chinese, and circulating it through the Empire, and basing all examinations for the Civil Service on the European standard of educational tests. Perhaps he turns for comfort to the Chinese classics in prose and poetry. Perchance he takes down the *Book of Odes* and reads:—

[1] Professor R. K. Douglas.

"Brightly resplendent in the sky revolved
The Milky Way. The monarch cried, Alas!
What crime is ours, that Heaven thus sends on us
Death and disorder?
Surely I have grudged
To God no victims; all our store is spent
Of tokens.
The many dukes and ministers of the past
Pay me no heed.
O God, from Thy great Heaven
Send me permission to withdraw myself
Into seclusion.
Afar
In the high Heaven God listens not. And yet
Surely a reverent man, as I have been
To all intelligent Spirits, should not be
The victim of their overwhelming wrath."[1]

He dare not leave the palace to seek change of air or society. What is there to do but to yield to the abundant temptations of the harem and seek distraction in the companionship of concubines and eunuchs, like so many of his predecessors, if there be even sufficient energy left for that? And, as a last resort, may he not "drink the water of immortality" and straightway ascend to his place in Heaven?

Great must be the misery of Kwang-Su, for he has broken the chief commandment of all the Confucian philosophy, which is "Walk in the trodden paths." He has dared to be an innovator; has dared to advocate the abolition of the pig-tail and of the time-honoured practice of foot-binding.

Several months later—June 2, 1899—Sir Claude Macdonald telegraphed to Lord Salisbury: "The situation at the palace is, I learn from a reliable authority, very strained." It must have been "very strained" indeed at the period which we are now

[1] Song of homage by King Seuen, 8th century B.C. *Book of Odes*, part iii., book iii., Ode 4. Trans. by Prof. R. K. Douglas.

dealing with. Prince P'u-Chun, the Prince Imperial and adopted son of the Emperor Tung-Chi, the hope of the Manchu Party, is in the palace. By an Imperial decree, issued in Kwang-Su's name on the 24th of January also, P'u-Chun was appointed to take the Emperor's place in the performance of the sacrificial rites in celebration of the New Year (January 31st) in three of the palace halls; and another decree, on the same date, ordered that a magnificent ceremony of congratulation, in honour of the heir-apparent, should be held in the palace on the 26th of January.

Kwang-Su is dead! Long live P'u-Chun!

The education of the heir-apparent was entrusted by the Empress Tszu-Hszi to two high officials. One of them, named Ch'ung-Yi, was a Manchu, and his daughter was a wife of the Emperor Tung-Chi. Sir Claude Macdonald says of him: "He has had no intercourse with foreigners, and is said to be of conservative tendencies." The other, Hsu-T'ung, was a Chinese bannerman of exalted rank, "a hater of foreigners and all their ways." Sir Claude Macdonald says of him: "He lives in the street where most of the foreign legations are situated, and has borne out this reputation by the consistent opposition which he has offered to the macadamising of this street and to all other material reforms."

CHAPTER VI

Spread of Secret Societies—Siege of the Legations at Peking—Failure of Seymour's relief expedition—International bombardment of Taku—We appeal to Japan—Kwang-Su appeals to Queen Victoria.

WHILE the Teen-Tse, or Son of Heaven, was thus a prisoner in his own palace, popular demonstrations against foreigners prevailed in the streets of Peking and in many parts of the provinces. The British, American, French, German, and Italian representatives met on March 10, 1900, and forwarded a joint request to the Tsung-li-Yamen asking that an Imperial decree should issue suppressing the Boxer societies. Sir Claude Macdonald suggested to Lord Salisbury that an international naval demonstration in the Gulf of Pechili would be advisable. Lord Salisbury did not see his way to adopt that course until "other means of pressure were exhausted."

It is noticeable that the Russian representative refused to co-operate with the five Powers above mentioned. Neither could he be induced to join them when they waited, as a deputation, upon the Tsung-li-Yamen, to call for the suppression of secret societies.

At the interview with the Tsung-li-Yamen, Baron von Kettler, the German minister, expressly demanded the suppression of two societies—by name the Ta-Tao-Hai, or "Big Knife Society," and the I-Ho-Ch'uan, or

"Fist of Righteous Harmony." But the Chinese Government took no effective measures.

As the year advanced the populace continued to display its detestation of foreigners and foreign religions. In May the French minister reported that sixty-one Roman Catholic converts were killed at a place within ninety miles of Peking. At length the Russian minister was permitted to act with the other representatives to the extent of communicating his views to them and joining in the demand for the punishment of those who had menaced and assaulted foreigners. On May 21st M. de Giers privately told Sir Claude Macdonald that, in his opinion, "both landing guards and naval demonstrations were to be discouraged, as they gave rise to unknown eventualities." It is impossible to avoid asking why did Russia take up this exceptional position? Did the disturbances make for her advantage?

On May 27th, M. Pichon, the French minister, told the *Corps Diplomatique* at Peking that "all his information led him to believe that a serious outbreak, which would endanger the lives of all European residents in Peking, was on the point of breaking out."

In reply to this intelligence Lord Salisbury wired authority to Sir Claude Macdonald to send for a guard of marines, and ordered British warships to Taku. Then the other foreign representatives, including M. de Giers, sent for guards. "The situation is one of extreme gravity. The people are very excited and the soldiers mutinous." Such was Sir Claude Macdonald's telegram to Lord Salisbury on May 30th. Next day the foreign guards arrived in the city, the British detachment consisting of three officers, seventy-five men, and a machine gun.

The Russian minister's views were now changed completely, at any rate his language was changed:

"He thought it most imperative that the foreign representatives should be prepared for all eventualities, though he had no news confirming the above report." He pretended to know something but refused to communicate it. "He had been authorised to support *any Chinese authority* at Peking which was able and willing to maintain order in case the Government collapsed." Had he a particular Chinese authority in his mind's eye? Was he prepared to support a Boxer Government?

Mouravieff spoke to our ambassador at St. Petersburg on May 31st, the day the foreign guards arrived at Peking, and said "he gathered that the danger was now less acute, and hoped that the more vigorous action of the fresh troops, which were being sent by the Chinese Government to check the Boxers, might avert the necessity of bringing guards to Peking." He still wanted to minimise the disturbances and the volume of anti-foreign feeling in China.

On June 4th two English missionaries, Messrs. Robinson and Norman, were murdered forty miles south of Peking. Sir Claude Macdonald telegraphed to Lord Salisbury: "Present situation at Peking is such that we may at any time be besieged here with the railway and telegraph cut. In the event of this occurring, I beg your lordship will cause urgent instructions to be sent to Admiral Seymour to consult with the officers commanding the other foreign squadrons now at Taku to take concerted measures for our relief."

Sir Claude Macdonald had already ascertained the extreme tension that existed between the members of the royal family in the palace, where Kwang-Sü was haunted by mortal spies and immortal spirits. "The Empress-Dowager," says our representative, "does not dare to put down the Boxers, although wishing to do

so, on account of the support given them by Prince Tuan, father of the hereditary prince, and other conservative Manchus."

The Admiralty telegraphed to Admiral Seymour: "The situation is difficult and your discretion must be quite unfettered. You may take precisely what measures you think expedient."

The Chinese Government issued a decree against the Boxers, but its terms were nugatory. The Boxers were not prohibited from drilling, "which," says our representative, "they now openly do in the houses of the Manchu nobility and in the temples." The British Legation became rapidly filled with British refugees, "mostly women and children." All the foreign ministers agreed that, "owing to the now evident sympathy of the Empress-Dowager and the more conservative of her advisers with the anti-foreign movement, . . . a rising in the city, ending in anarchy, will be the result, failing an armed occupation of Peking by one or more of the Powers."

The only resort now left to the diplomatists seemed to be to endeavour to secure "personal audience with the Empress-Dowager and the Emperor." What could Kwang-Su do for them? Nay, what could Tszu-Hszi herself do under such circumstances? Rulers who are treated as idols or oracles—whether they call themselves Gods on Earth or Sons of Heaven—can achieve nothing in times of popular tumults; are no better, in fact, than so many Marie Antoinettes; able only to ask such childish questions as "Why don't they eat cakes?"

Sir Claude Macdonald was instructed by Lord Salisbury to inform Japan of the desperate position of the foreigners at Peking; and, accordingly, a full description was telegraphed to Tokio. A telegram was also sent to Admiral Seymour to the effect that "unless

arrangements are made for immediate advance to Peking it will be too late." The British Admiral, in reply, wired: "I am landing at once with all available men, and have asked foreign officers' co-operation."

On June 10th Seymour left Tientsin with a force consisting of 300 British, 100 Americans, 60 Austrians, and 40 Italians. The Russian, French, and German detachments were to "follow immediately." On the 12th the relief force, now numbering 2,000, was half-way to Peking, and had halted at Langfang to attack the Boxers. On the same day a telegram was received from Sir Claude Macdonald that "the mutinous Kansu soldiery" had taken possession of the railway terminus at Peking.

On the 13th Admiral Seymour telegraphed that his relief column "had been able to cover only three miles in the past twenty-four hours." On the same day Mouravieff's stoical opinion was that "the relief force would save the situation in Peking"; and he went on to make an elaborate *apologia* for Tszu-Hszi. He said "the Empress-Dowager was powerless in the hands of fanatic and ignorant councillors, and that she would be willing to assist, and would be more amenable to sounder views if relieved from their control." Had he no sympathy for the generous Kwang-Su, who had shown himself to be the friend of European civilisation? What special brief did he hold for Tszu-Hszi? Did not Tszu-Hszi sympathise with these councillors whom Mouravieff thus sought to victimise? Was it not because she held views identical with theirs that she had been made Regent for the third time? Had Russia been privy to the *coup d'état* in the palace on January 20th?

On June 16th Seymour's relief column was stopped forty miles from Peking by a force of Chinese troops and Boxers. Hearing of this misadventure, the

admirals of the various Powers at Taku decided to bombard the forts at that place. The Taku forts protect the entrance to the Peiho River, the city of Tientsin, which is one of the principal treaty ports, being situated over thirty miles up the stream. These forts constitute, as it were, the sea-gates of Peking, which is also on the Peiho, and situated at a distance of about a hundred miles from the Gulf of Pechili.

In 1897 a railway had been laid down between Tientsin and Peking, but it was not available now, as it had been torn up by the rebels; and, as we have been apprised, its terminus at Peking was occupied by mutinous Kansu soldiery.

An international force of marines and bluejackets were landed at Taku on the morning of June 16th, and, at one o'clock on the morning of the 17th, the battleships opened fire on the forts, bombarded them for six hours, silenced their guns, and captured them. Tientsin was besieged by the rebels, and the garrison, which had been placed there by the allies, was in difficulties. On June 22nd Lord Salisbury telegraphed to the British minister at Tokio asking him to explain to the Japanese Government the gravity of the situation of foreigners in China, with a view to inducing them "to send a further force to their succour."

Lord Salisbury requested Russia to consent to a mandate being given to Japan to send 20,000 or 30,000 troops to China. Russia had already sent 4,000 troops to Taku; and there were now 3,000 Japanese troops on the way to the same place, Japan having been roused to action, not only by the despatch of so large a force of Russians to Taku, but also by the presence of a vast Russian army in Manchuria. We asked Germany to support our appeal to Russia, but she declined to do so, "being unable to judge whether the interests of third Powers would be affected by it."

Peking was now in a state of siege, and outside communication with the city was cut off. Seymour's force was repulsed by the Boxers, and had retreated to Tientsin.

A rumour, emanating from a Chinese source, was circulated that the Legations were safe, and that the Empress-Dowager had summoned Li-Hung-Chang to Peking. Li-Hung-Chang, though a Chinaman, was one of the favourites of the Manchu Court. For twenty years, 1874–1894, he had been Viceroy of the metropolitan province of Chi-li, and perhaps the most influential official in the Empire. It was he who acted as plenipotentiary in the treaty with Japan about Korea in 1885; in 1895, at the conclusion of the war, had gone to St. Petersburg, and there concluded the Cassini treaty with Russia; and visited England in the following year. He seems to have wavered between his allegiance to the *ancien régime* and Kwang-Su's reform projects, and, as we have seen, was banished from Peking, and deprived of most of his honours. He had recently been appointed Viceroy of the Two Kwangs, a post which, though it kept him at a distance from the court, was one of the most important in China.

Seymour's reverse had entailed a loss of 62 killed and 220 wounded, of whom 27 killed and 97 wounded were British. On June 29th, the day Seymour fell back upon Tientsin, our consul at that place received the following written message: "Foreign community besieged in British Legation. Situation desperate. Make haste.—R. HART." There were in Tientsin, on the date of the receipt of this message from Sir Robert Hart, a European army of 9,223 men, made up of the following contingents: American, 218; British, 1,940; French, 840; German, 650; Japanese, 1,095; and Russian, 4,480—there was not much reason to appre-

hend any neglect of Russian interests. It was decided that at least 40,000 men would be required to make a successful advance on Peking. Lord Salisbury, conscious of our inability to provide even a reasonable share of that quota, urged Japan to send a large body of troops immediately, and "offered to furnish financial assistance for that purpose." Japan, in reply, promised to bring her contingent up to 20,000; but declined the offer of financial aid. Thus, by the co-operation of Japan, we insured the presence of a military force in China sufficient to provide a counterpoise to Russian influence, in case the worst should happen, and a partition of China should be at hand.

One of the gravest questions now presented for the consideration of the Powers was whether the bombardment and capture of the Taku forts on the one hand, and the repulse of the Seymour relief force on the other, constituted a "state of war." Were the Allies at war with China? If they were, then the worst might happen at any moment. Russia, Germany, and France, taking advantage of our exhaustion, caused by the Boer War, might completely oust us from China—a most grievous calamity to contemplate from a commercial point of view.

Sir Chihchen Lofengluh, the Chinese minister in London, assured Lord Salisbury that the Taku forts had opened fire upon the vessels of the European Powers without orders, and that the Chinese Government "were not responsible for the disorders, and deplored them."

The position taken up towards the foreign ministers in Peking immediately after the capture of the forts was, as we shall see, quite the reverse of this peaceful declaration.

An Imperial edict was issued to all Chinese ministers abroad on June 29th, the day that Sir Robert Hart's

message reached Tientsin, and Seymour's column fell back on the same place, explaining that the hostilities at Taku "were not of China's making." The edict proved that China had no intention whatever of going to war. "No false estimate of her power led her to measure her forces with those of the combined fleets." What humility and astuteness!

The edict concluded as follows: "Our ministers are to remain at their respective posts in foreign countries, and to continue to discharge their official duties with unremitting care and assiduity. Let this be transmitted to them. Respect this."

Lord Salisbury determined to avoid war, as the one contingency apparently most prejudicial to British interests, thus describes his own attitude to Sir Chih-chen Lofengluh: "I informed the Chinese minister that there is no reason that it should be considered a state of war exists, if the Taku forts had fired without orders from the Government at Peking, and if the attacks on the international troops are without authority."[1] This despatch was addressed to our consul at Canton, which is the capital of the province of Kwangtung, of which Li-Hung-Chang was Viceroy. "I strongly advise that if he could do so with safety to himself," continued Lord Salisbury, "Li-Hung-Chang should go to Peking. We should be sorry if his life should be in danger. He must be the best judge of the risk, as he knows his own countrymen better than I do," &c.

This despatch was communicated to the Powers, and its conciliatory tone did much to avert the threatened danger of war in China.

Kwang-Su himself addressed a telegram direct to Queen Victoria on July 3rd. With our knowledge of

[1] Despatch to Consul Scott, Canton, June, 1900.

the Emperor's position the document assumes a special interest for us. We almost recognise Kwang-Su's style in certain paragraphs, as if we saw him wielding the vermilion pencil :—

"The Emperor of China to Her Majesty the Queen of England, Empress of India, sendeth greetings :

"Since the opening of commercial intercourse between foreign nations and China the aspirations of Great Britain have always been* after commercial extension and not territorial aggrandisement."

No statement of British policy could be more true. Whereas Russia, France, and Germany avowedly sought after spheres of monopoly, each holding for itself alone whatever it acquired, we had been willing to share our advantages with the world, relying entirely on our abilities and the merits of our manufactures for our resultant profit.

The imperial telegraphic despatch went on to explain that the Emperor had nothing to do with the dissensions, or with the acts of warfare at the Taku forts. Then the personal note in the telegram disappeared, and the following businesslike paragraph presented the case from China's standpoint :—

"In consideration of the facts, that of the foreign commerce of China more than 70 per cent. belongs to England, that the Chinese tariff is lower than that of any other country, and that the restrictions on it are fewer, British merchants have during the last few decades maintained relations with Chinese merchants at the ports as harmonious as if they had both been members of the same family."

The simile may have been intended to convey that the inmates of the imperial palace were now a harmonious and happy family.

"But now," the telegram went on to say, "complications have arisen, mutual distrust has been engendered,

and, the situation having been thus changed for the worse, it is felt that, if China cannot be supported in maintaining her position, foreign nations, looking on so large and populous a country, so rich in natural resources, might be tempted to exploit and despoil it; and, perhaps, differ among themselves with respect to their conflicting interests."

That "would not be advantageous to Great Britain." China is endeavouring to cope with existing difficulties, "but she feels that if left to herself she might be unequal to the occasion, should it ever arrive, and therefore turns to England in the hope of procuring her good offices in bringing about a settlement of the difficulties which have arisen with the other treaty Powers."

It is not difficult to discover the authorship of the concluding paragraph. Who but Kwang-Su himself could have given so pathetic a turn to the close of a diplomatic despatch? Who but Kwang-Su would have made such a candid avowal of helplessness, and couched his appeal for assistance in so personal a key?

"The Emperor makes this frank exposure of what is nearest to his heart, and hopes that this appeal to Her Majesty the Queen-Empress may be graciously taken into her consideration, and an answer vouchsafed to it at the earliest possible moment."

Poor Kwang-Su, Son of Heaven, High Priest of God, Mediator between the Supreme Being and erring mankind! did you think that Queen Victoria was a second Tszu-Hszi? Did you believe that she could coerce every one in her dominions to do as she wished? Great was the contrast between the position of the Sovereign of Great Britain and your own unhappy circumstances! A constitutional monarch whose throne was "broad-based on her people's will,"

about whose virtuous family life there was no mystery, no pretensions to the supernatural, no deception of any kind—whose reign began when Tszu-Hszi was not three years old, and who had occupied her throne for a period already three years longer than the reign of Kang-He or of Keen Lung, the Queen of England must have occupied a position inconceivable to Kwang-Su!

At this date, and for a year previously, our own position was full of embarrassment. The Boers had declared war on us in October, 1899, and we had been in the throes of the struggle with South Africa ever since then. In April, 1900, three months previous to the despatch of this personal appeal to Her Majesty by Kwang-Su, Queen Victoria had bravely gone to Ireland, at once to pacify the only disloyal section of the inhabitants of the British Isles, and to prove to Europe how slight was the significance to be attached to the Irish "bad language" then prevalent. It was an act of unprecedented bravery to have been undertaken by a lady of eighty-one years, and it is certain that Tszu-Hszi herself would not have had the courage to pay a personal visit, under similar circumstances, to, let us say, Kansu, or one of the other outlying Chinese provinces.

But we must now return to our friends in Peking, whose position was one of extreme danger and difficulty at this time.

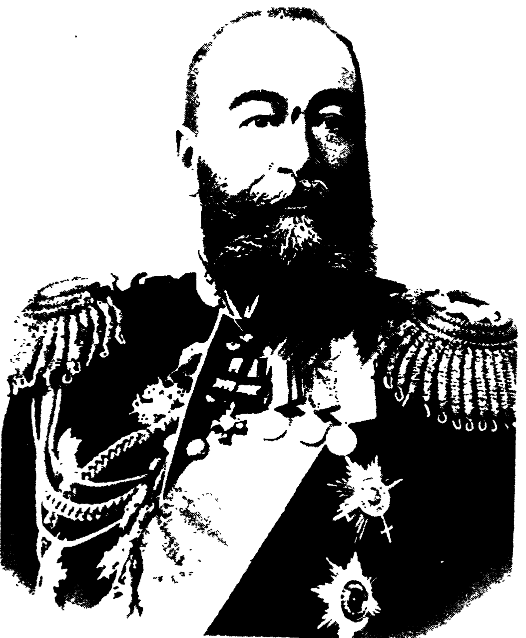
CHAPTER VII

The siege of the Legations at Peking, July, 1900—Murder of the German Minister and the Japanese Chancellor—Revolution at Peking—Our position in China.

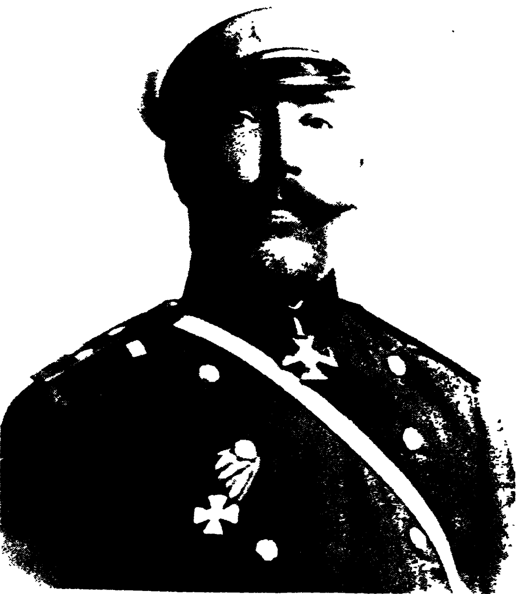
ANTI-FOREIGN riots were by no means a novelty in China. They had frequently occurred before—in 1891, for instance, when two Englishmen had been murdered at Wusich, foreign settlements attacked, and several mission-houses destroyed. Such disturbances are generally fomented by the distribution of placards and leaflets accusing the foreign missionaries of immorality of the most heinous character, denouncing them as hypocrites who only make a pretence of religion, in order that they may indulge their vicious propensities and commit unspeakable crimes with impunity.

The kidnapping of children, and the boiling of various portions of the human body for the purpose of manufacturing medicines, are amongst the commonest of the offences laid to the charge of the missionaries at such periods of popular unrest.

"Foreign devils have come with their doctrine of Christianity," said the Boxer proclamation. "Converts of the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths have become numerous. These Churches are devoid of human principle and full of cunning. They have attracted the greedy and avaricious as converts to an



THE VICEROY, ADMIRAL ALEXIEFF.



GENERAL STOESSEL.

unbounded degree. They practise oppression and corruption until even the good officials have become covetous of foreign wealth, and have become the foreigner's servants."

It was against such an outburst of prejudice and ill-feeling that the Powers had now to contend at Peking. The British and other Legations were besieged from June 20th to the middle of August, the investment and attack lasting eight weeks; "a particularly heavy attack" being made on the British Legation on July 3rd, the day on which Kwang-Su's telegram to Queen Victoria was despatched. Railway communication had been cut off at the end of May. At the beginning of June Sir Claude Macdonald interviewed Prince Ching at the Tsung-li-Yamen. The Prince "repeated, in a more perfunctory manner than usual, his assurances that the Throne took a serious view of the danger." Hsu-Ching-Cheng, one of the other Chinese ministers who were present, "said plainly that the Chinese Government, in the absence of representative institutions, could not afford to disregard such an indication of the people's will as was afforded by the unmistakable popularity of the Boxer movement." The Chinese minister went on to say, "the movement was, in the first instance, an expression of the deep-seated resentment caused by the proceedings of native Christians and their priests." Hsu-Ching-Cheng "came over to sit by the Prince," and audibly discussed "the growth of the Boxer movement among the Imperial troops, saying it would not be long before they would be all Boxers." Hsu-Ching-Cheng was by no means hostile to the foreign envoys, and was executed in the following month as a suspect by the dominant Manchu party, because of his supposed leniency towards foreigners.

Sir Claude Macdonald came to the conclusion that "the only remaining means by which the foreign representatives could influence the Government seemed to be a direct approach to the Throne," and, assuming that to be unattainable, he was of opinion that "the mere suggestion of asking for a special audience of the Emperor and Empress-Dowager might have a good effect." The Chinese ministers heard of the proposal, and "were greatly perturbed by it," and promised that railway communication would be restored on June 8th. The Empress-Dowager was reported to be "extremely angry with the Boxers," and threatened to leave Peking and remove the court to the ancient capital of Singanfu. The decrees issued from the palace were pervaded by "a spirit of extreme leniency towards the Boxers as Boxers," but "the conduct of bad characters who have taken advantage of the movement to create disturbances" was severely censured. In one of the decrees "great stress was laid upon the ill-feeling stirred up by the interference of priests (*i.e.*, Roman-French priests) in litigation between Christians and non-Christians." Sir Claude Macdonald says from himself, "There may be, and I do not doubt that there is, a good deal of truth in the statement." In all the decrees the Boxers were spoken of as "good Chinese subjects with an admixture of bad characters," and it was made clear that "Boxers and Christians were regarded with equal benevolence by the Throne."

Open acts of rebellion and outrage now began to take place in Peking. The grand stand of the race-course was burned down, "a native Chinese Christian being roasted alive in the ashes." A party of Legation students, riding outside the walls, were attacked with swords and spears, and only escaped by freely using their revolvers.

The Empress-Dowager and the Emperor took their departure from the Summer Palace on June 8th, and took up their residence within the portion of Peking called the Pink, or Forbidden City. It was rumoured that "the Empress-Dowager and her advisers had determined to exterminate all foreigners in Peking, and to drive them out of China;" also that General Tung Fu-Hsiang "had guaranteed the ability of his Kansu troops to execute the behests of his Imperial mistress in this regard." On June 10th Sir Claude Macdonald received the telegram before referred to, announcing the departure of Admiral Seymour's relief force. From and after that day telegraphic communication was cut, and so remained until the entry of the relief force in August.

It was now ascertained that "Prince Tuan (the father of the heir-apparent) was the chief supporter of the Boxer cult." But little time need be wasted on such rumours; for in times of political unrest in all countries desperate efforts are made by those in power to evade personal responsibility and shift the blame from one individual to another in turn, so that the conviction of any of their number may be rendered impossible.

On June 11th Mr. Sugiyama, Chancellor of the Japanese Legation, was reported to have been murdered by the Chinese troops outside one of the city gates. On the afternoon of the 13th a large force of Boxers entered the city, and before nightfall "the churches and chapels in the East city were in flames, as well as most of the houses occupied by foreigners, and a great number of native Christians had been massacred."

Chinese ministers were constantly assuring the foreign representatives during these days that "any increase in the Legation guards was unnecessary." Two

of the ministers who called on Sir Claude Macdonald for that purpose were shortly afterwards executed "because of their opposition to the Prince Tuan party." On the 14th, 15th, and 16th of June parties of marines from the British Legation rescued several native Christians, amongst them some unfortunates on whom "they found a number of Boxers in the act of 'perpetrating' sacrificial murder," offering the perverts up as a whole burnt-offering to Heaven presumably. The European residents had almost all taken up their quarters by this time within the compound of the British Legation, which was the largest and most central enclosure in the foreign quarter. The other Legations stood adjacent, and the whole district, up to and including a portion of the city wall, was fortified and preparations made for a stubborn defence. The military force in the Legations consisted of the international guards, which had been brought into the city so providentially on May 31st—18 officers and some 400 marines and bluejackets of different countries, Sir Claude Macdonald being elected to the supreme command.

On the 19th of June a Chinese courier brought in the bad news that Seymour was once again "hopelessly blocked both in front and rear." At five o'clock that afternoon a note was presented by the Tsung-li-Yamen to all the Legations, stating that an assault had been made on the Taku forts, which amounted to a "declaration of war" against China by the European Powers, and ordering the Legations "to leave within twenty-four hours for Tientsin." The communication did not reveal the fact that the forts had been captured on the 17th, which would have been welcome intelligence to the beleaguered Legations.

None of the foreign representatives, so far as Sir Claude Macdonald knew, anticipated "that the Chinese

Government would, in fact, go mad" and declare war upon "all Europe, the United States, and Japan." He tells us that "The French bishop in Peking, for instance, who had by general admission the best sources of information, believed up to the end of May that a guard of forty or fifty marines was all that was needed to make the French cathedral safe."

A meeting of the foreign representatives was at once held, on receipt of the note ordering them to leave the capital; and a reply was sent to the Tsung-li-Yamen "protesting their inability to leave at such short notice, and requesting an interview with the Princes and ministers next morning at nine." No reply to this request was received by the representatives that evening, or on the following morning; and, with the exception of Baron von Kettler, they were all "convinced that it would be useless to go to the Yamen." The German minister, relying, perhaps, upon the special honour paid to Prince Henry of Prussia in May, 1898, by the Emperor and Empress-Dowager, or anxious to secure some special advantage for his country, determined to go to the Yamen alone.

On his way thither in his sedan-chair Baron von Kettler was shot dead in the street by a Chinese soldier in full uniform. Some hours after the murder the Chinese Government sent its anxiously-awaited reply to the representatives, "regretting that it would not be safe for them to proceed to an interview," but making no reference to the death of Baron von Kettler. In the Imperial despatch to Chinese ministers abroad, dated July 29th, and referred to on a previous page, the ultimatum ordering the ministers to quit Peking is emphatically described as "an expedient requesting the Diplomatic Body to temporarily absent themselves from Peking," to ensure their own safety. The refusal to grant an interview is attributed to "the menacing

attitude of the populace who then thronged the streets." The same decree implied that it was the original intention of the Chinese Government "to send the foreign ministers to Peking under the protection of a sufficient well-armed escort"; but that, at the date of issuing the decree, July 29th, "it was too late to do so"; and "the only course open to the Yamen was to continue the ministers in Peking under the protection of an adequate guard of Chinese troops."

The "protection" thus afforded was, as we shall see, the reverse of "adequate."

The twenty-four hours allowed for departure were expiring, when a message came from the Yamen giving "an extension of the term," as they "considered it unsafe" for the representatives to leave. At four o'clock p.m., when the first limit of time allowed for departure was reached, to the alarm and astonishment of the representatives, "the Chinese troops opened fire punctually upon the Legations." And thus, on the 20th of June, 1900, began the memorable siege of the foreign Legations at Peking, which lasted until August 14th.

The Emperor is said to have protested against the proceedings sanctioned by the Empress-Dowager and the Government. Prince Ching supported Kwang-Su, but their advice was overruled by Prince Tuan and the overwhelming majority of the Manchu officials and nobles present at the meeting of the Grand Council of the Empire, which sat during the night of the 18th and morning of the 19th of June. The Empress-Dowager was with the anti-foreign party. But, in justice to her, it seems highly probable that if she had opposed them, she would have been overruled. Like many of the ablest female sovereigns, she was compelled to play off one party against the other; and on such an occasion as this she had to side

with the majority or forfeit all her influence. One point is worthy of note. During all Tszu-Hszi's regencies the eunuchs of the palace had exercised considerable influence in politics, and they now unanimously espoused the cause of the Boxers. Their loathsome profession could not be served by the introduction of Western civilisation into China!

The attack on the Legations by the Chinese soldiery and the Boxers, once begun, went on without intermission until the middle of July. Several sections of the Chinese army took little or no part in the attack, notably the artillery and the regiments under Prince Ching's command; but the Kansu soldiers, under Tung-Fu-Hsiang and their Boxer allies, worried the besieged with shot and shell, and, at the end of four weeks the inmates of the Legations were reduced to desperate straits. The Japanese had been driven back to their last stronghold. Several attempts were made to burn out the defenders of the British Legation, and in doing so the rioters burned down the celebrated Hanlin Yuen, or Hanlin College, a Government institution, the heads of which had the right of advising the Throne, and which contained the Chinese national library, in which were numbers of extremely valuable MSS., some of them being the oldest written documents in the world. From a Chinese point of view this calamity was as great as that inflicted on Europeans by the destruction of the Alexandrian library by the Moslems. The greater portion of the French Legation had been destroyed or captured. The Germans and Americans had entrenched themselves in a portion of the city wall and had been incessantly fighting. The French bishop and several thousand of his Chinese converts, who dared not show themselves outside, were surrounded in the north cathedral, where they had taken

shelter, and which was not destroyed, probably because it was at a distance from the fighting zone around the British Legation. No special mention is made of the Russian Legation having been attacked, or of the conduct of Russians during those days of peril.

Meanwhile outside the city the allies, after considerable delay, relieved the Tientsin garrison on July 14th, having stormed the native city, not without considerable loss. But, as nothing was done by way of advance to the relief of Peking until the following month, we must continue our narrative of the events within the city.

On and after the 14th of July, the date of the fall of Tientsin, letters began to reach the besieged foreign representatives. Previous to that date no communication of any description had made its way into the defenders of the Legations. The letters which now began to filter through the lines of the besiegers were anonymous, and it was not possible to discover who the writers were. Some "were in the usual Tsung-li-Yamen form, and were accompanied by the cards of all the Yamen ministers." They were addressed to Sir Claude Macdonald for the most part, and were signed "Prince Ching and others," or "Prince Ching and Colleagues."

In the replies which were sent to these missives, Sir Claude Macdonald says, "We allowed the Chinese to indulge the belief that there was a chance of our placing ourselves at their mercy by proceeding under Chinese escort to Tientsin." But he hastens to add, "There was never any possibility after the siege had begun of our accepting the Chinese suggestions. To English memories the massacre of Cawnpore presented a sufficient similarity to our own case to act as a warning of the consequences of surrender to treacherous Orientals, but the recollection

was hardly needed to convince us that our only chance of safety lay in holding out where we were. We could not have abandoned to massacre the native Christians we had been protecting."

The first of these mysterious letters was brought in by a Roman Catholic convert on July 14th, and it contained "an invitation to the foreign ministers to transfer themselves, their families, and their staffs to the Tsung-li-Yamen for safety, in detachments without taking a single armed foreign soldier." Needless to say, the ruse was not successful. On the 15th, Mr. Warren, a student interpreter, was fatally wounded at one of the barricades. On the 16th Captain Strouts, of the Marines, was shot dead while walking inside the barricades with Colonel Shiba, the brave commander of the small Japanese force, and Doctor Morrison, the able correspondent of *The Times*.

In the evening of the same day, while the burial service was being conducted, a letter arrived for Sir Claude Macdonald by the hand of the old convert who had brought the previous communication. It purported to be from the Yamen, and contained "assurances that the Legations would henceforth be properly protected." The deferential tone of the letter led the besieged to the conclusion that the Chinese had been beaten outside by the allies. It was, as we know, the fall of Tientsin which inspired this respectful communication.

A suspension of hostilities for several days ensued. "The Chinese troops showed themselves freely without arms in all the barricades, came forward to talk to our men, and explained that orders had now been received not to fire." But the Kansu soldiers, under Tung-Fu-Hsiang, remained "sullen and suspicious." Eggs and vegetables were smuggled through the lines

of the friendly Chinese troops under Jung-Lu; but, meanwhile, the Chinese continued to strengthen and extend their barricades and dig out mines, a proceeding which was a cause of deep uneasiness to the besieged, who, on their part, perfected their trenches and dug out counter-mines.

The 18th of July was a red-letter day in the annals of the siege. On that day Sir Claude Macdonald, in an interview with a Chinese colonel, arranged an armistice. Jung-Lu was now stated to be the Generalissimo, and all with whom the besieged came into contact asserted that he was "the ruling power in the Government." On the same day a Yamen secretary appeared before the gate of the Legation, bearing a letter from Jung-Lu. The Russian minister, now mentioned for the first time, requested the secretary to take back with him "a cypher telegram." The message was accepted, but it was returned next day with the intimation that "it could not be sent." The contents of the telegram remained, of course, unknown; and it is impossible to say whether its passage to and fro conveyed any intelligence between the sender and the Chinese Government. On that day also the Japanese minister received the good news from Tientsin that a relief force was being organised.

On July 19th a notice was received from the Chinese Government urging the Legations to at once depart to Tientsin, and casting on the foreign representatives the responsibility for "any disaster that might follow if they elected to remain." It is clear that the Manchu party and the Boxers wanted to get the ministers into their possession, so as to have something wherewith to purchase immunity for themselves in the inevitable day when the armies of the Powers should appear before Peking in overwhelming force.

On the next day a note arrived at the Legation,

enclosing the cards of all the ministers of the Yamen, and stating that "an Imperial decree had been issued referring to the heat of the weather, and directing that a quantity of water-melons and other vegetables, with which the Legations were *probably* not provided, should be sent to them"! And that evening the welcome consignment of fruit duly arrived. It would not be easy to produce a finer example of Chinese sarcasm than that contained in the adverb "probably."

The position taken up by the Chinese Government in its negotiations with the foreign Powers was that the besieging of the Legations was an act of mutiny and rebellion, in which the Chinese soldiery and the Boxers combined, and with which the Government had nothing to do. It is not easy to reconcile such a position with the apparent control exercised by the Yamen over the besiegers at stated intervals of the siege. All the proceedings of the Chinese Government during the revolution at Peking are worthy of being studied in some detail, mainly because they show the utter incapacity of the rulers of China, and thereby put us in possession of a knowledge which we should never lose sight of in our dealings with the Celestial Empire.

Even a brief record of the conduct of the Chinese Government during the siege of the Legations enables us to see why it is that the integrity of China cannot be long preserved. It supplies a practical illustration of the effeteness of the Chinese system of government. And, as we shall presently gather from the proceedings of the international relief force, experience proves that no self-denying agreement between the great Powers of Europe, Asia, and America can be faithfully adhered to in practice for any length of time. It was fortunate for us that Asia and America were now represented, by Japan and the United States respectively, on the

Council of the Great Powers. If the term "Great Powers" had, as heretofore, meant the European Powers alone, we should have been ousted from China in the year 1900, unless we were prepared to prosecute war against Russia, Germany, and France, and stake our existence in the struggle at a moment when we were peculiarly unready.

Russia, our most formidable opponent in China, was being supported by Germany and France at every recent crisis. But the policy of America and Japan invariably tended to check the aggressiveness of those three Powers, who would have divided China amongst themselves, and closed it against cosmopolitan trade almost as effectively as it had been closed under the Ming and Manchu dynasties.

Our policy in China was quite different. In the words of the late President McKinley, it had been "the settled policy and purpose of Great Britain not to use any privileges which might be granted to it in China as a means of excluding any commercial rivals," and "freedom of trade for it (Great Britain) in that Empire meant freedom of trade for all the world alike." [1]

[1] Despatch delivered to Lord Salisbury by Joseph H. Choate, September 22, 1899.

CHAPTER VIII

Siege of the Legations at Peking, continued—Sir Robert Hart—Arrival of Sir Alfred Gaselee and the International Relief Force—Flight of the Imperial Family.

ON July 21st another admirable example of Chinese sarcasm was delivered at the besieged Legations by official messengers. It was nothing less than a letter for Sir Robert Hart, the Inspector-General of Customs and Posts in the Chinese Empire, who was amongst the besieged inmates of the British Legation, a man who held the highest honours which could be conferred by the Emperor of China.

Sir Robert Hart is an Irishman, having been born at Portadown, in the county of Armagh, on February 20, 1835. He went to China in 1854 as a student interpreter, and had resided there continuously up to the year 1900. He had the greatest faith in the Chinese; and at various intervals had received from the Empress-Dowagers and the Emperors the Red Button, which is the Button of the highest rank; the Peacock's Feather, a most coveted distinction; and the Order of the Double Dragon. Sir Robert Hart's deceased Irish ancestors had also been honoured by having the patent of Chinese nobility conferred upon them for three generations back, so that the Spirits of the Harts of Portadown were thereby ennobled in Heaven and could commune with deceased Chinese

monarchs, like Kang-He and Keen-Lung on the same terms of intimacy as Sir Robert Hart himself was privileged to enjoy in his converse with Kwang-Su and Tszu-Hszi.

Sir Robert Hart, being an official of the Chinese Government itself, nay, almost a Chinaman himself by length of residence in China, implicitly believed in the Chinese, and was almost as sanguine as the French bishop that the Boxer movement would come to nothing. At the date of the siege he was in his sixty-sixth year. In 1886 he had married an Irish lady, also a native of Portadown, by whom he had a son and a daughter. It is possible that he would have been safe had he remained in his own house; but then his concern was not for himself alone, and he determined to cast his lot in with his fellow-Britishers.

The letter which he now received from the Yamen "expressed some concern at not having had *recent* news of him, and mentioned that *a report had reached them* of his house having been burned." Sir Robert Hart believed, like Milton did during the English civil war, that, as "the great Emathian conqueror bade spare" the house of Pindar, so would the Boxers withhold their hands from the sacred walls of this most remarkable Celtic-Chinaman's abode. The house contained a collection of most valuable official records, as well as its owner's diary for forty years. But it was burned to the ground by the rioters, who recognised no distinction of person between foreigners, and thereby a grievous loss was inflicted on the world at large. Happily Sir Robert Hart survived all these stirring adventures, and in 1901 wrote an interesting work entitled *These from the Land of Sinim*, and in the same year received the brevet title of Junior Guardian of the Heir-Apparent.

Nor were all the troubles of the besieged from the

outside. One of the inmates of the Legations, "a very turbulent and noisy Swedish missionary," had to be placed in confinement in consequence of having lost his reason. This man escaped from the Legations on the night of July 23rd, and, after six days' absence, was sent back on the 29th, "with a polite letter from the Jung-Lu." This lunatic had given the fullest information as to the condition of the inmates of the Legations, the state of their supplies and ammunition, and had actually cautioned the Chinese against their habit of firing high! On the day after the escape of the Swedish missionary the attack on the Legations had recommenced, the result, no doubt, of the fugitive's information. Sir Claude Macdonald protested against the breach of the armistice, but the only answer he received was a letter urging the foreign representatives to fix a date for their departure to Tientsin. A second letter was received on July 25th, containing an invitation to the ministers "to telegraph *en clair* to their Governments to reassure them as to their well-being." Of this letter Sir Claude Macdonald says, "read in the light of our experience it could hardly be surpassed for insolence." The Chinese, having no fear of death themselves, are naturally a cruel race. But it must be remembered that the Government, being unable to suppress the Boxer rebellion and the mutiny of its own soldiers, were compelled to temporise. Had the Europeans in the Legations been men of less stern stuff, and had they surrendered, or had they been captured by their assailants, it is impossible to say what would have been their fate. The principal members of the party might have been preserved as hostages, but undoubtedly the rank and file would have been cruelly murdered. Except on the grounds that incapacity in a responsible Government is criminal, it does not seem probable

that the Empress-Dowager was a privy to the cruel treatment meted out to the envoys. It seems highly improbable that Kwang-Su could have been an accomplice in those proceedings.

The request to telegraph *en clair* was declined. But in our minister's reply the Chinese Government were informed of the sufferings of the women and children within the Legation barricades; and in response there came, "in obedience to Imperial instructions," a supply of melons and vegetables and a large quantity of flour and rice. The native Christians in the Legations cautioned the foreign representatives to beware of poison; but in justice to the Imperial donors it must be stated that there seems to have been no foundation for such a suspicion. After this came one of the mysterious letters, signed "Prince Ching and Others," suggesting that the native converts should be sent out to "quietly pursue their avocations," as the popular tumult had now subsided. No reply was sent to this "artless communication." If the converts had gone out they would have been immediately massacred.

On July 29th hostilities were resumed, and in reply to a fresh request for the departure of the Legations, a reply was sent by the envoys stating that while the attacks continued they "could feel no confidence that they should be safe on the road." On August 1st news was received from Tientsin that the relief force would start in a few days. At this date the occupants of the British Legation numbered 883; consisting of 113 soldiers, of whom 40 were wounded in hospital; 414 non-Chinese civilians, of whom 191 were men, 147 women, and 76 children; as well as 356 Chinese, men, women and children. The entire number of the beleaguered, including all the native Christians, was about 3,000.

On August 3rd Sir Claude Macdonald received a cypher telegram from Lord Salisbury. He also received a letter from Jung-Lu, who said that he was making arrangements to escort the representatives to Tientsin. Jung-Lu said that he regarded the firing on the Legations, which had been proceeding since June 20th, and which was certain to be renewed, should the foreign representatives set out for Tientsin, "as absolutely unimportant." Sir Claude Macdonald, in just indignation, protests. "They regarded our being exposed to heavy fire from their troops as not only a matter of indifference but a suitable subject for jest." On August 4th a pressing letter, enclosing the cards of all the Yamen ministers, except those of Hsu-Ching-Cheng and Yuan-Chang, who had been executed, was received, urging the members of the Legations to depart with all haste. This led the foreign representatives to suspect that "relief was on its way." As a matter of fact it was on that day that the relief force started from Tientsin. Another letter was sent, informing the ministers that "all their Governments had requested that they should be provided with safe conduct out of Peking without delay." But the representatives were not to be cajoled into coming outside their barricades, and they sent a reply asking to see the original letters from their Governments.

On August 7th the Yamen wrote to inform the Legations of the death of H.R.H. the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, better known as the Duke of Edinburgh. Sir Claude Macdonald wrote in reply that "if the Chinese Governments still retained a wish for peace, as the keeping of their minister at his post (in England) seemed to indicate, they should not simultaneously show open hostility to the envoys here, both by allowing their troops to fire on them and by preventing supplies from reaching them." Another

letter came from the Yamen, informing the envoys that Li-Hung-Chang had been appointed plenipotentiary to negotiate with the foreign Governments. Thus the Chinese Government kept up the fiction that diplomatic correspondence was being carried on between it and the Legations, and thereby inferentially eschewed its responsibilities for the state of siege.

On August 10th communications were received from the British and Japanese generals, dated August 8th, announcing that the relief expedition was on its way, and might be expected to arrive at Peking on the 13 or 14th of the month.

On August 11th the Yamen wrote to say that they would send an officer to the Legations daily to obtain a list of whatever food was required, and that the officer would immediately make the necessary purchases. Sir Claude Macdonald says of this, "One grows tired of contrasting these pacific epistles with the hostile acts that accompanied or succeeded them." A desperate attack was made on the Legation barricades after the receipt of the last of these peaceful missives. The general alarm-bell had to be rung and the defenders hurried to their loop-holed posts. Even the reserves had to be called out to repel this assault. When hostilities ceased Sir Claude Macdonald sent an answer to the Yamen, enclosing a list of the supplies required by the besieged.

On August 12th a letter was received at the Legations in which the "Princes and ministers" announced their intention of making a call upon the envoys "with a view to negotiating peace." The envoys replied that they would receive their august visitors next morning. But during the entire length of that day a constant fire was maintained on the Legations, "with a particularly heavy and prolonged attack in the afternoon."

During this engagement one of the Chinese barricades collapsed, and the Chinese soldiers behind it were shot down with a Nordenfeldt gun and the rifle fire from the Legations. Next morning, when the hour fixed for the reception of the Chinese ministers arrived, there came, instead of the expected visitors, "a letter breathing a spirit of defiant hostility." The envoys were accused of having killed or wounded a Chinese officer and twenty-six men, and were informed that "their actions were regarded as unfriendly." This anti-climax, with which the epistle closed, was followed by a brief postscript which stated that "the Princes and ministers were all engaged and could not call" on the foreign ministers.

The envoys now expected a fierce attack to be made upon them, and Sir Claude Macdonald wrote a letter warning the Chinese Government that "personal reprisals" would be enforced by the Powers against all those who were guilty of violence towards the Legations. Before he had an opportunity of forwarding this missive, three letters arrived from the Chinese ministers couched in the friendliest tone, enclosing six telegrams for various envoys, expressing concern at the continued fighting, and hoping that it would be soon possible to stop it; declaring that strict orders had been given to the Chinese troops not to commence hostilities, and that disobedience would be dealt with by martial law; and finally thanking the Legations for their treatment of the Chinese within their lines, and promising to make arrangements for their removal.

The Chinese referred to in this paragraph were not converts, but were Chinese tradesmen whose shops and places of abode happened to be in the quarter of the city which the Legations had barricaded in their own defence. They refused to leave, when given the option of doing so, and throughout the siege they carried on

their ordinary business, or remained passive spectators of the proceedings of the defenders within the barricades. When food began to grow scarce Sir Claude Macdonald wrote to Jung-Lu asking him to make arrangements to receive those Chinese subjects, but as yet they had not been removed.

The long letter closed with the aspiration that "dating from to-day, neither Chinese nor foreigner would again hear the sound of the rifle." While Sir Claude Macdonald was reading the letter a shell came crashing into his house and burst in his dressing-room, and a violent fusillade was opened on the Legations by the Chinese troops. Three times during the night the reserves had to be called out in support of the firing line. But at two o'clock in the morning of the 14th of August those within the Legations, who were fearfully listening to the strife outside, distinctly heard other sounds, at once strange and familiar, mingled with the crack of the Chinese rifles. From the east came distinctly the quick fire of Maxim guns and the booming of heavy artillery, which could not possibly belong to the Chinese army. Hope sprang up in every breast, and all felt sure that the relief force had at length arrived and were battering down the walls of Peking.

For twelve hours—that is to say, from 2 a.m. until half-past two in the afternoon—the inmates of the British Legation listened to the music of the artillery, momentarily expecting to see the British uniforms. It was the Indian Native Brigade which first found its way to the British Legation. "The 7th Rajpoots," says Sir Claude Macdonald, "were the first of the allied forces to arrive, and our eight weeks of siege was over."

The delay in the despatch of the relief expedition from the capture of Tientsin on July 14th until August 4th arose partly from the difficulties incidental



GENERAL LINIEVITCH.

It is the Emperor's will and I submit; but the future [illegible] who is the [illegible] for the [illegible]



GENERAL GRIPENBERG.

I decided that it was [illegible] for me to remain any longer at the front and next day I [illegible] to General Kuropatkin, [illegible] relieve me [illegible] command [illegible]

to organising a force recruited from so many different countries, and largely from international jealousies. Japan, being so near the scene of action, was in a position to send the force necessary for the occasion with greater facility than any of the other Powers, except, perhaps, Russia. But neither Russia nor Germany supported the application for troops which England had made to Japan. Nothing was done practically towards the despatch of the column until the arrival of an Indian brigade at the beginning of August. The strong reinforcements sent by Japan arrived about the same time. A few French Colonial regiments from Tonking, a body of American troops from the Philippines, and a brigade of Russians from Port Arthur, in addition to a British Naval Brigade, made up the balance of the relief column.

The actual strength of the force was: Japanese, 10,000 with 54 guns; Russians, 4,000 with 16 guns; British 3,000 with 12 guns; Americans, 2,000 with 6 guns; French, 800; Germans, 200; Austrians and Italians, 100; total, 20,100 men and 88 guns.

The British and American commanders, Sir Alfred Gaselee and General Chaffee, led the way, and compelled the others to follow suit, and the entire expedition started for Peking on August 4th. The British Naval Brigade, however, was the first portion of the expedition to start, having proceeded up the river on the evening of August 3rd. On August 13th—that is to say, in nine days—the column arrived within artillery range of Peking, and halted for consultation. It was decided to make a general advance on the morning of the 14th. During the night, however, the Russians, who were commanded by General Linievitch, of whom we shall hear much in subsequent chapters, broke through this arrangement and advanced to the walls with the object of being the first to effect an

entry. Their scheme did not succeed, and they were repulsed with heavy loss.

In the morning a general attack was made as arranged. The Japanese forces met with fierce opposition. The Americans were also delayed owing to their way being blocked by the defeated Russians. But the British contingent, being guided to one of the water-gates, successfully effected an entry, Sir Alfred Gaselee and a party of Sikhs being the first to force their way into the city.

It was at three o'clock p.m. that this occurred, and the British troops were met inside the water-gate by Sir Claude Macdonald, who led them along the canal road to the British Legation; the regiment which first entered the Legation quarter being, as before mentioned, the 7th Rajpoots, under Major Vaughan, closely followed by the 1st Sikhs, under Major Scott.

The Dowager-Empress and the Emperor were actually at this moment within the Pink, or Forbidden City, and remained there that night. It was only on the afternoon of the 15th that the Imperial family made their escape through the northern portions of the Tartar City and arrived safely at the ancient capital of Singanfu, in the province of Shansi. When the allies had organised their scattered forces after the victory, they marched into the Forbidden City, but found the Imperial apartments deserted by all except a few eunuchs and underlings.

CHAPTER IX

Occupation of Peking—Russia proposes immediate evacuation—Arrival and operations of the German army under Waldersee—Russian excesses in Manchuria—Proposed Russo-Chinese agreement of 1901 withdrawn—Anglo-German agreement of 1900—America's position—Our interests in the Yangtse Valley—The Peace Protocol and Indemnity, 1901.

THE Legations having been relieved, the city was occupied by the international army. Looting became general; and, dreadful as had been the destruction of life and property by the Boxers, the spoliation now was just as terrible. The city was parcelled out into districts of occupation, which were placed in charge of the contingents from the different Powers. In the Russian districts the most unspeakable excesses are said to have been committed. The same is said of the districts entrusted to the French troops, who were mostly Colonials—that is to say, native regiments from Annam. It is admitted that order was first established in the district entrusted to the Japanese, and soon afterwards in the British district, where the troops were native regiments from India, and in the American quarter. But some weeks elapsed before the plunder and rapine of the soldiery, as a whole, had subsided and discipline was again firmly established.

When this was accomplished a large proportion of

the Japanese troops returned to Japan. The Russian ambassador in London informed Lord Salisbury that Russia—(1) would support the existing form of government in China; (2) would "exclude everything which might lead to a partition of China"; and (3) would assist "the establishment, by common effort, of a legitimate central power, capable, in itself, of assuring order and security in the country."[1] He also announced that, in order to facilitate the return of the Chinese Court and Tsung-li-Yamen to Peking, the Russian troops were about to quit the Chinese capital, and that M. de Giers and the Legation staff would depart for Tientsin.

On August 29th Count Lamsdorff impressed upon our ambassador at St. Petersburg the necessity of "the prompt evacuation" of Peking by the allied troops. He also urged the departure of all the foreign Legations to Taku or Tientsin. "When the Emperor and Empress-Dowager return to Peking," said the Russian Foreign Minister, "the Allies will be able to conduct more successful negotiations with them from their position at Taku or Tientsin."

France, America, and Japan were in favour of withdrawal also, and the bulk of the Russian troops went off to Manchuria. "So far as we are advised," said the United States Government in reply to the suggestions of Russia, "the greater part of China is at peace, and earnestly desires to protect the life and property of all foreigners." If the Russians withdrew, the Americans would withdraw.

The duties now remaining to be performed by the troops in Peking were principally in the nature of police work. But Sir Claude Macdonald gave it as his opinion that a general massacre of Christian con-

[1] Statement by M. Lessar, Russian *Chargé d'affaires*, August, 1900.

verts and friendly Chinese "would most certainly ensue" if all the foreign troops left the city just then. He also opposed the withdrawal of the Legations.[1] The other Powers, contrary to precedent, came round to our view, and the Russian proposal fell through. It will have been noticed that Germany did not interfere, but it must have been her active support of our proposal which had secured for it the approval of the Powers. The allied troops, therefore, remained at Peking, and the Chinese Court continued at Singanfu.

The feeling now uppermost in every one's mind was an anxiety to learn what would be the next move. The Russian and Japanese Governments had shown plainly, by the withdrawal of the bulk of their troops, that they did not intend to join in any conspiracy having for its object the conquest of China. Yet everybody was waiting; even the international victors on the spot were, so to speak, holding their breath, as if they expected some portent to happen. A curious stoppage had occurred in the proceedings, and a blank uncertainty seemed to prevail. Gradually the political mist began to clear and the difficulty of the situation stood revealed. Peking had been captured and occupied, but the German legions had not yet arrived.

During the month of July, while the Legations were besieged, the Russian Government had communicated its opinion to the Powers, that the general command of the international relief force should be entrusted to one selected officer, not only for the immediate relief of Peking, but for other, undefined, "ulterior measures." On July 20th Lord Salisbury made a contribution to the debate by asking for a definition of "ulterior measures." And the ball of discussion by elaborately-written essays was circulated from

[1] Despatch to Lord Salisbury, September 7, 1900.

capital to capital, while the foreign residents were being harried to death in the leaguered compounds at Peking. On August 7th, three days after General Gaselee had started on his mission, our ambassador at Berlin was presented with a *note verbale* setting forth that the Emperor of Russia had informed the Emperor of Germany that it "would afford him the highest satisfaction to place the Russian troops in Chi-li under the superior command of Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee."

None of the other Governments had been obliging enough to make this flattering offer. Nevertheless, the *note verbale* went on to say, "His Majesty the German Emperor is ready to undertake the task *thereby devolving upon him*, as he has reason to assume that other Governments also consider that a German supreme command would be an advantage." His Majesty, therefore, desired to know the views of Great Britain "as to the manner in which they would be disposed to connect the British troops in the province of Chi-li with the army operating under Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee." Lord Salisbury meekly consented to serve under the German generalissimo. We had already more than enough of trouble on our hands in South Africa.

It was "an army," not a contingent, or a brigade, which Germany sent out—an army of 20,000 men, under the command of a Field-Marshal. "When you meet the foe you will defeat him," said the Kaiser to his departing legions at Bremerhaven. "No quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy!" But the army was hardly well on its way to China when Europe was electrified by the tidings that the allied forces had relieved Peking, on their own responsibility, without waiting for the arrival of the mighty Count von Walder-

The month of September was drawing to a close before the earth of China trembled under the colossal march of the German legionaries. . . . Had it not been for us there would have been no European soldiers or civilians left to admire their entry into Peking. Indeed, it is more than doubtful if the German army would ever have entered the Chinese capital, if we had consented to the proposed international withdrawal before its arrival had taken place. Perhaps it was a desire to save China from the horrors of this German invasion which had prompted the action of Russia, America, France, and Japan, or the fear of a German supremacy in China to the detriment of other interests?

The Russian troops had almost disappeared; the Japanese, save for a few detachments, were already at home, having had the temerity to leave the ground before the arrival of their "superior commander" from Germany. The French and Americans never recognised Count Waldersee, or followed the eagles of the Fatherland. The British contingent and the small force of Austrians and Italians were alone willing to accept his generalship.

What was to be done now that he had arrived? The army must be employed. Vengeance must be wreaked on the murderers of Baron von Kettler. Raids in search of Boxers were accordingly organised in every direction. The native Chinese were harried and outraged and plundered. The public buildings were sacked, and, in particular, a set of ancient astronomical instruments, which had been left untouched by the troops of the relief force, were carried off from Peking as booty. The German Field-Marshal and his staff had taken up their quarters in the Winter Palace, and there General von Schwarzoff, chief of the staff, was burned to death in a fire which broke out in the following April, the German army being still in Peking

at that date. An expedition was despatched at Paoting Fu, capital of the province of Chi-li, to avenge the murder of the missionaries. The town was destroyed, a heavy fine levied, and the provincial treasurer and colonel of cavalry decapitated. Another foray was made through the Nankow Pass to Kalgan. An expedition into the province of Shansi was proposed with a view to occupying the ancient capital of Singanfu, in which the Court had taken refuge; but even our patience had been worn out by that time, and we politely refused to join.

But Count von Waldersee's achievements were not exclusively military. He enforced his "superior commands" over us in political and commercial matters as well. For instance, he gave Russia the construction and control of the North China Railway line from Tongku on the coast, near the mouth of the Peiho River, to Yangtsun, a station beyond Tientsin on the road to Peking, and gave Germany the working of the continuation of the line from Yangtsun to Peking. He also recommended that the section of the same line of railway running through the coalfields of North China from Tongku to Shanhaikwan, a distance of 147 miles, should be handed over to the Russians.

On July 16, 1900, during the naval operations of the Taku forts, and pending the relief of Peking, the majority of the allied admirals had decided to give Russia the control of the short section of the line from Tongku to Tientsin, twenty-seven miles. The British and American admirals had voted against the proposal, and Lord Salisbury had pointed out that "the line was mortgaged to British bondholders," and that it "should revert to its former management on the termination of hostilities." The Russians had then seized the railway and expelled the railway company's staff. Hostilities were now over, but Count von

Waldersee, so far from hastening the reversion of the line to its former management, gave Russia increased power over it; and the Russian Government was proceeding with the repairs of the line, and was apparently determined to oust the railway company from the management.

On September 19th, Mr. Keswick, Chairman of the British and Chinese Corporation, made a complaint on the subject to our Foreign Office. On October 4th Sir Claude Macdonald telegraphed that "in his opinion Count Waldersee's decision was unjust." On October 6th General Gaselee wired to the Foreign Office that, "under the decisions of the Admirals," the "Russians claimed *the whole railway from* Taku to Pekin," 117 miles, and that the Russian General had formally protested against the section of the line above Tientsin being repaired by the British and Japanese. At one stage of the dispute British and Russian troops were drawn up under arms, at a few paces' distance, ready to fight for possession of the railway siding at Tientsin, and the "superior commander" does not seem to have done anything useful to maintain peace. It was only after prolonged negotiations, which it is unnecessary to go into, and without any assistance from Count Waldersee, that the affairs of the North China Railways were saved from the clutch of Russia and placed on a footing which did justice to the rights of the British and other bondholders.

During the protracted discussions which preceded signing of the peace protocol other and graver difficulties arose in Manchuria owing to the aggressive action of Russia. The Boxers in that country had risen in revolt while the Legations were besieged, and the Russians had pursued a campaign of vengeance against all classes of the inhabitants, notably at the frontier town of Blagovestchenk. It was this guerilla

war which ostensibly prevented Russia from hastening to the relief of Peking, and constituted her excuse for not taking a more predominant part in the international expedition.

The Russians set up "a reign of terror" in Manchuria. "The massacre of Blagovestchenk," says one who visited the spot on July 21, 1900, "surpasses for savage ferocity anything in the history of the Middle Ages. So great was the slaughter of men and women and children that the Amur River was choked with corpses for many miles. By order of General Gribsky the wretched Chinese inhabitants of the town were driven by thousands into the river; and those who would not enter the water were murdered in cold blood on the bank by the Cossacks. The deputy, Pristav Shabanov, looked on at this orgie of massacre until his gorge rose against it, and, sickened by a surfeit of bloody horrors, he was forced to turn away."[1] The same authority says that fifteen thousand "inoffensive Chinese" were slaughtered at Blagovestchenk and in the surrounding country.

The Russian army now occupied Manchuria, from the Amur to the Gulf of Liao-Tong. They took possession of Niuchwang, an important treaty port at the mouth of the Liao River, and usurped the position of the Chinese Government. The Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank complained that "the Chinese Customs House had been taken possession of by the Russians, who were collecting revenue for provisional government." They were also active in Korea, where they endeavoured to acquire Masampho, the finest harbour in that country.

On August 20th Lord Salisbury questioned the Russian Government with reference to Niuchwang, and the Russians replied that the measures they had taken

[1] *Russia As It Really Is*, by Carl Joubert.

were temporary, and had been "solely dictated by the absolute necessity of repelling the aggression of the Chinese rebels, and not with interested motives, which are absolutely foreign to the policy of the Imperial Government"! Russia, it appears, differs from all the world in this important respect, namely, that she never does anything "with interested motives."

Sir Claude Macdonald's stricture on the conduct of the Chinese Government during the siege of the Legations appears to be equally true of the Russian policy, the pacific, unselfish epistle being invariably followed by the hostile and selfish act. It was so in this instance; for on October 1st the Governor of the Amur district of Siberia issued a proclamation annexing "the former Manchu territory of Trans-Zeya, as also the Manchurian territory occupied by the Russian troops on the right (that is, the Chinese) bank of the Amur; confiscating the lands of Chinese subjects who had fled during the disturbances; destroying the Chinese town of Aigun, and forbidding it to be ever again re-established!

On December 31st the Peking correspondent of *The Times* published an agreement between Russia and China dealing with Southern Manchuria. Lord Lansdowne instructed our ambassador at St. Petersburg to inquire if the report of the agreement were true. Sir E. Satow telegraphed from Peking that "the report as telegraphed" to *The Times*, was authentic. Count Lamsdorf, successor to Count Mouravieff—who died on June 21, 1900—gave us to understand that Russia was simply negotiating to prevent further disturbances in Manchuria. Sir E. Satow, who had succeeded Macdonald at Peking, telegraphed on February 5, 1901, that the agreement which Russia wanted to force on China included (1) the extension of Russian territory in the peninsula of Liao-Tong, so as to include the city of

Kinchow; (2) the purchase of the railway north of Shanhaikwan; and (3) the management of all Manchurian customs houses by Russia.

Kinchow is a most important town at the head of the Gulf of Liao-Tong. There is a railway between it and Shanhaikwan, whence, as we have seen, the line runs to Tongku, Tientsin, Yangtsun, and Peking. Lord Lansdowne at once entered into communication with America, Japan, and Germany, and warned the Chinese Government that any such separate agreement with Russia "would be a source of danger" to China. Japan sent a similar warning. Germany administered what may be called a conditional caution to China, advising her not to conclude individual treaties before she had "estimated her obligations towards all the Powers as a whole." Sir E. Satow shrewdly pointed out that the German warning did not specifically mention Manchuria. The American ambassador suggested that the foreign settlements in China should be "internationalised"—that is to say, that none of the foreign settlements should belong to any particular Power, but should be the joint property of all the Powers. This suggestion did not meet with support from any quarter.

On March 6, 1901, Sir E. Satow obtained the Chinese text of the proposed agreement with Russia, and the document more than corroborated all that had been feared. Not only was a protectorate, almost amounting to an annexation, declared over Manchuria, but it was also stipulated that China should not, without the consent of Russia, grant any privileges whatsoever with regard to mines, railroads, or other matters, to any other Power in the vast regions of Manchuria, Mongolia, and all Central Asia, as far as Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khoten, and forbidding China to construct railways, even for herself, in those immense

territories without Russia's consent. Under this agreement also a separate indemnity was to be given to Russia, in addition to her share in the general compensation which the Powers were about to exact from China.

On March 15th the German Chancellor made a sympathetic speech in the Reichstag on this subject of Russia's operations in Manchuria and Central Asia. He alluded to the Anglo-German agreement of October 16, 1900, with which we shall deal presently. He said "that agreement was in no sense concerned with Manchuria. There were no German interests of importance in Manchuria, and the fate of that province was a matter of absolute indifference to Germany." If language has any meaning in Germany, these words meant that, so far as Germany was concerned, Russia might do as she wished in Manchuria, and that Germany would not lift a finger to stop her career of aggrandisement in that province. The Chancellor went on to say, it is true, that "at the present moment, while China's obligations towards the Powers were as yet unsettled, her estate should not be unduly reduced. . . . Germany had consequently informed China that she would deprecate the conclusion at the present time of any agreement with no matter which Power which would impair China's financial resources." It was only *for the present* that Germany objected to this Russo-Chinese agreement.

On March 20th the Chinese ambassador at London was commanded by an Imperial decree to implore Lord Lansdowne either to help China out of the difficulty in which Russia had placed her, or to ask Russia to extend the time stipulated for signing the agreement. "Otherwise," pleaded the Chinese ambassador, "we, being placed in a great difficulty, will be unable to oppose Russia any further." Lord Lans-

downe declined to do anything, but he told Sir Chihchen Lufengluh that if China made separate agreements detrimental to British interests, we should require compensation. Even in China itself intense opposition was evinced to the enormous surrender of Chinese interests involved in the proposed agreement. The two Viceroys of the Lower Yangtse had memorialised the Throne against it. Li-Hung-Chang was in favour of it, but his advocacy did not prevail, and the Chinese Government finally instructed their minister at St. Petersburg to refuse signature.

The indignation against it in Japan ran so high that hostilities between that nation and Russia seem to have been within measurable distance, though such an eventuality as a declaration of war by Japan single-handed against all the might of Russia was not considered to be within the sphere of practical politics in the year 1901.

The Muscovite diplomatists gave way, and on April 5th the St. Petersburg *Official Messenger* announced that Russia "had withdrawn" the agreement.

While our "superior commander," Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee, was embarrassing us in China in the manner described, the German Government had induced us to sign an agreement which virtually deprived us—in the opinion of Germany it had actually deprived us—of whatever special advantages we had secured for ourselves in the Yangtse Valley in 1898.

It will have been noted that in all the separate agreements entered into by China with the Powers in 1898, no special concessions were made to the United States, although, since the acquisition of the Philippine Islands, which are as large as the United Kingdom and have a population of 8,000,000, America has become an Asiatic Power with a keen eye to business in China. Her interference in Asiatic politics was one of the new

features of the crisis, from 1898–1901. Having got nothing in 1898, President McKinley addressed to us, through Mr. Choate, on September 22, 1899, the friendly despatch before referred to, eulogising our candour and impartiality. But, besides the compliment, the document continued the significant statement that "the Government of the United States will in no way commit itself to any recognition of exclusive rights of any Power within, or control over any portion of, the Chinese Empire under such agreements as have been recently made." The American admiral had opposed the bombardment of the Taku forts during the siege of the Legations in 1900.

During the Boxer rebellion in that year we took on ourselves the pacification of the Yangtse and the riparian territories, as being within our sphere of influence. Our Consul at Shanghai entered into negotiations in the month of June in that year with the Viceroys of Hankow and Nanking, for the maintenance of peace; and thirteen British war vessels patrolled the great river. On August 2nd our Government stated in the House of Commons that, "as regards the Yangtse district and the adjacent region, assurances have been given to the Viceroys that the ships and forces of Great Britain would co-operate with them as far as possible in quieting unrest and securing order, and provision was being made for the due fulfilment of that assurance."

In July the Viceroys of Nanking and Wuchang had addressed an appeal to us through our consul at Shanghai, on behalf of the Empress-Dowager, to whom they "declared their loyalty," and "announced that they would be unable to carry out the agreement of neutrality with Great Britain unless it was guaranteed that her person would be respected." At the same time the Viceroy of Wuchang asked us for a loan, and

we acceded to the request by advancing £75,000 for ten years at 4½ per cent.

We landed 3,000 troops at Shanghai, where there was a European population of 7,000. Portion of the German army also landed there. And when the danger had passed by, our consul commended "the evident good faith displayed by the Viceroys of Nanking and Wuchang."

Excitement was rapidly subsiding in Central and South China, mainly owing to our action, when the political and commercial world of England had been startled by the publication of a secret agreement between ourselves and Germany, by which we agreed that "the ports on the rivers and littoral of China should remain free and open to trade and to every other form of economical activity for the nationals of all countries without distinction."

If that agreement meant anything, it was intended to apply to all China alike. No particular part of China was specified, though, it is true, the Yangtse ports and Shanghai are the most important "ports on the rivers and littoral of China." But the German Chancellor took the first opportunity presented to him of letting the world know the opinion of Germany as to the scope and purport of the agreement.

"Some Powers amongst them," he said, speaking in the Reichstag, on March 15, 1901, "were pursuing commercial, others political, objects. Germany," in his opinion, "belonged to the former category. The Anglo-German agreement of the 16th of October, 1900, had been concluded in that spirit." Then he went on to define the scope of the agreement, which, in his opinion, did not refer to all China. He said, for instance, that it "was in no sense concerned with Manchuria"; the reason being that "there were no German interests of importance in Manchuria, and the

fate of that province was a matter of absolute indifference to Germany"!

Now Manchuria is the ancient kingdom of the present Manchu dynasty, and is, therefore, an integral part of China as much as the province of Shantung. Therefore any agreement referring to China includes Manchuria. But the Germans nevertheless excluded Manchuria from the scope of the agreement. Nay, they went further, for in the same speech the German Chancellor alluded to this Anglo-German agreement expressly as "the Yangtse agreement." "No doubt," he said, "a community of interest with other Powers made co-operation with those Powers advisable; of such a nature was the Yangtse agreement, to which Russia took no exception."

Thus he established "a community of interest" between England and Germany in the Yangtse Valley. Russia might take the barren regions of Manchuria, Mongolia, and Turkestan, might even take the capital of China itself; she might embarrass England as much as she thought fit in North China—Germany would not interfere with her. But neither Russia nor any other Power must come within the precincts of Shantung, where, with the exception of Chifu, there are no river or littoral ports of importance, and where Germany had jealously isolated the English settlement at Wei-hai-wei from all communication with the interior. And neither must England lay claim to any privileges in the rich valley of the Yangtse, her special agreement with China to that effect notwithstanding, but she must admit Germany to "a community of interests" in every commercial undertaking in that important region. An agreement between China and Russia about Manchuria and Central Asia was sacred. Germany would not interfere with such an understanding because "there were no German interests of import-

ance in Manchuria"; it was too far north. But an agreement between China and England about the Yangtse Valley was in no respect sacred, was, in fact, only so much waste paper, because there were—if not *in esse*, at least *in posse*—"German interests of importance" in that fertile and populous district!

Count von Waldersee still continued to take the side of Russia in North China, even after the enactment of this agreement, whenever and wherever our interests came into conflict with those of that Power. If our object in signing the agreement had been to soften our "superior commander," we had not achieved our purpose; and we had assuredly laid down rocks ahead for ourselves in the great central region of the Yangtse Valley.

All the Powers, with the exception of Germany, had now seemed for some time to be as anxious to evacuate Peking as they had formerly been eager to occupy it, and the diplomatists had been busy discussing the terms of settlement with China. The French Government appears to have been the first to draw up a memorandum on the subject. Prince Ching and Li-Hung-Chang had been appointed plenipotentiaries on behalf of China, and the French Government declared that the question now at issue was to obtain from them "proper reparation for the past and real guarantees for the future." The five conditions of settlement contained in this French draft, which was accepted by the Powers as the basis of negotiation, were as follows:—(1) Punishment of the principal culprits; (2) prohibition of imports of arms; (3) equitable indemnities for states, societies, and individuals; (4) establishment of a permanent Legation guard at Peking; (5) dismantlement of the Taku forts; and military occupation by the Powers of two or three points on the road between Peking and the sea. And

the document concluded by stating that "the Government of the Republic thinks it impossible that such legitimate conditions should fail to be speedily accepted by the Chinese Government."

On October 16th Prince Ching and Li-Hung-Chang submitted a despatch to the foreign envoys at Peking stating that, "in accordance with Chinese law, the proper Boards had received orders from the Throne to deal severely with those of the Princes and ministers who had supported the Boxers." The plenipotentiaries said "the Emperor had been much distressed by recent events," and the despatch went on to admit that China must compensate in acts or money; furthermore that "the attack on the Legations" was contrary to all "international law"; and they gave "an assurance that no recurrence of such action would ever take place." They proposed "a general convention," and, if necessary, "separate conventions with each of the Powers"—a favourite resource of the Chinese Government when in difficulties.

In November an Imperial decree was issued from the Court at Singanfu, which provides a curious example of Chinese methods of punishment. This decree (1) deprived Princes Tuan and Chuang of all offices and hereditary rank, and sentenced them to imprisonment for life; (2) sentenced Princes Yi and Tsai Yin to imprisonment for life; (3) deprived Prince Tsai-Lien of his hereditary rank; (4) degraded Duke Tsai-Lan and Ying-Nien; (5) "excused Kang-Yi from punishment on account of being dead"; (6) degraded Chao-Hsu-Chiao, but left him in office; (7) banished Yi-Hsien to the farthest frontier; and (8) reserved the punishment of Tsung-Fu-Hsiang for future consideration "on account of his being in command of Imperial troops."

If Kang-Yi's offence had been greater, his punish-

ment would have been extended so as to reach him in the land of Spirits—indeed, we shall find a demand made, on behalf of the Powers, that it should be so extended! And how contrary to European notions, is it not, to reserve the punishment of a criminal because of his being commander-in-chief of the Imperial army?

We informed the Chinese ambassador in London that this list of punishments was "a most unsatisfactory document." The British Government had just been rearranged after the General Election of 1900, and Lord Lansdowne had become Foreign Minister, although Lord Salisbury's paramountcy and responsibility continued as heretofore. Lord Lansdowne said the sentences on the offenders "would not be accepted as sufficient by any one concerned." We wanted vengeance in the shape of capital punishment. But Lord Lansdowne was entirely mistaken in his opinion that all concerned would press for the heaviest punishment. The President of the United States said "the demand for capital punishment as *an ultimatum* might result in a failure of negotiations."[1]

Sir Claude Macdonald had been transferred to Tokio in the interval, and our envoy, Sir Ernest Satow, was approached by the Russian envoy, who took an early opportunity of expressing "his grave doubts as to the possibility of enforcing the demand for the execution of the leading Chinese officials." The French ambassador expressed the same opinion.

On December 1st Sir E. Satow presented a draft of a proposed joint note to the Chinese plenipotentiaries, in which the first demand made was "Prompt despatch to Berlin of an Extraordinary Mission, headed by an Imperial Prince, to express the regret of His Majesty the Emperor of China and the Chinese

[1] Despatch to Mr. Conger, American Envoy in Peking, November, 1900.

Government for the murder of His Excellency the late Baron Kettler, German Minister"! The second demand was, "Erection on the place where the murder was committed of a commemorative monument suitable to the rank of the deceased, bearing an inscription in the Latin, German, and Chinese languages expressing the regret of the Emperor of China for the murder."

We probably felt that we owed some reparation to the German Emperor for the grave error committed by General Gaselee in having hastened to the relief of Peking a full month before the arrival of Field-Marshal Count von Waldersee and his army of 20,000 Germans.

The chief object to be aimed at by British diplomatists now, apparently, was the securing of an atonement by blood for the murder of Baron von Kettler, and the erection of a monument in the German language upon the identical spot where the German envoy was slain! We ourselves had never done anything of the kind under similar circumstances, therefore it is difficult to believe that the proposal emanated from us. We did not erect a monument on the spot where Lord Frederick Cavendish was murdered in the Phœnix Park at Dublin, for instance, because it is the British policy to forget rather than to remember old scores. Just as the Russian Emperor was represented as having suggested Waldersee as the Commander-in-Chief of the International Relief Force, so now it seems as if we were put forward as suggesting the despatch of a penitential mission from China to Berlin, and the erection of a monument in the German language in the capital of China.

Nay, we demanded more than this in the proposed joint note submitted by Sir E. Satow; for we insisted on the "death penalty for Prince Tuan and Chuang, Duke Lan, Ying-Nien, Kang-Yi (who appears to have

been already dead), Chao-Hsu-Chiao, Tsung-Fu-Hsiang, Yu-Hsien, and those who shall be subsequently designated by the representatives of the Powers."

A long discussion between the Powers ensued. Russia, Japan, France, and America were against us. Germany alone was with us, for it was she who appears to have been leading us in this ungenerous and entirely un-English policy.

We now come to the year 1901. On January 17th the Prince Ching and Li-Hung-Chang handed an answer to Sir E. Satow's joint note, in which they said, "A request for additional severity of the punishments will be addressed to the Throne by the Chinese plenipotentiaries." Lord Lansdowne telegraphed to Sir E. Satow, asking, in despair apparently, "whether none of his colleagues would support him in demanding the death penalty for Prince Tuan and Duke Lan." Sir E. Satow replied that "the United States, Russian, and Japanese ministers had formally declared themselves opposed to it." The French minister did not expect to obtain it. The German minister had voted for it, but thought that "the psychological moment when it might have been obtained" had passed away.

The Chinese presented an amended list of punishments which Li-Hung-Chang gave to the Russian minister, M. de Giers, but which that gentleman appears not to have communicated to his colleagues. When at last this amended list was received by all the envoys, it was found to be as follows :—

1. Prince Chuang would be made to commit suicide.

2. Prince Tuan would be exiled to the New Dominion—that is, Eastern Turkestan—and get imprisonment in perpetuity. The French minister inquired whether this sentence involved confiscation of

property. The Chinese plenipotentiaries replied that Tuan had no property to be confiscated, as it had all been destroyed.

3. Duke Lan would be degraded and exiled, but, as he was Vice-President of the Peking gendarmerie, acting in obedience to Prince Tuan, the president of that office, his guilt was less than that of the others. Being a near relative of the Imperial family, the death penalty in his case would not be carried out. Chao-Hsu-Chiao and Ying-Nien were to receive the same punishment as Duke Lan.

4. With regard to Kang-Yi, the Chinese plenipotentiary stated that "his death precluded further discussion." The French minister demanded that posthumous punishment should be inflicted upon him. The Chinese replied that such degradation could be certainly inflicted. Then the French minister persisted in inquiring whether such degradation would have the same legal consequence as would have been produced if Kang-Yi had been condemned to death. Li-Hung-Chang replied that the consequences would be the same—that he would lose everything. And the French minister was satisfied. It is something to be thankful for that it was not our minister who thus proposed to carry a scheme of vengeance into the Land of Spirits.

The German minister asked why the death penalty was not recommended in the case of Prince Tuan as well as Prince Chuang. The answer was "that Tuan was a near relative of the Emperor, and admitted to terms of the closest intimacy with both Emperor and Empress," and that "the banishment proposed in his case was equal in effect to death itself." The German envoy still persisted, and Prince Ching was forced to remind the envoys of the golden rule of Confucius, "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do

to others," and, in the words of the despatch, to "appeal for considerate treatment for China." Our minister harassed the plenipotentiaries also, and the question remained unsettled at that meeting.

5. In the case of Yu-Hsien "the death penalty can be carried out." Li-Ping-Han and Hsu-Lung would be deprived of all posthumous honours.

6. With regard to Tung-Fu-Hsiang, the Chinese plenipotentiaries argued that "he was in command of the army, and enjoyed great personal popularity among the Mahommedans. They had every desire to punish him later." It might, perhaps, be pleaded in extenuation of the Chinese that the Kansu soldiery, who were most violent in their attacks upon the Legations, were largely Mahommedans from that province. The French minister said that they could not admit Tsung-Fu-Hsiang to escape the death penalty.

The argument over the punishment clauses and the amount and distribution of the indemnity was continued for several months, and it was not until September, 1901, or more than twelve months after the relief of Peking, that the Peace Protocol was at length signed by all the Powers, its terms being briefly as follows:—

1. The clause arranging for a penitential pilgrimage to Berlin and the erection of a monument to Baron von Kettler was agreed to.

It was Prince Chun's lot to be the apologist for Kwang-Su; and when he reached Switzerland on his way to Germany, he received a letter informing him that he would be expected to perform the kowtow at his reception by the Kaiser. Prince Chun refused, and telegraphed to Peking for instructions. His action in refusing to kowtow was approved, and the mission would have fallen through had not the Kaiser withdrawn his demand. Viewed as a practical joke, the

Kaiser's action may be defensible in an age which is sadly wanting in humour. But from any other point of view the proposition was unworthy of a European sovereign. The Chinese had frequently demanded that Europeans should kowtow, it is true; but then it was the custom to do so in China. But in no European country, not even in Germany, where the Majesty of the Kaiser is rated so highly, has it been the custom to kowtow. The debasing practice in vogue at the papal court was the nearest approach to the kowtow to be found in Europe; but the Pope, like the Chinese Emperor, claimed to be the High Priest of the Universe and the Vicegerent of God on earth. Moreover, the Emperor of China had received Prince Henry of Prussia on terms of equality at Peking in 1898, and therefore Prince Chun might well have been spared the indignity offered to him now by Prince Henry's sovereign.

2. Banishment for life was decreed against Prince Tuan and Duke Lan; suicide for Prince Chuang, Ying-Nien, and Chao-Hsu-Chiao; death for Yu-Sien, Governor of Shansi, and Hsu-Chang-Yu. Posthumous degradation was decreed against other high officials already dead, and posthumous rehabilitation for the memories of others who had protested against the proceedings of the Boxers. Tsung-Fu-Hsiang escaped punishment.

3. A mission of apology was to be despatched to the Emperor of Japan for the murder of the Chancellor of the Japanese Legation.

4. Expiatory monuments were to be erected in all the desecrated international cemeteries.

5. The importation of arms and ammunition, and materials for same, was to be prohibited for two years, and at the end of that period the prohibition was to be renewed if deemed necessary by the Powers.

6. The Emperor of China agreed to pay the Powers an indemnity of 450,000,000 Haikwan taels (£64,000,000). This sum was to represent the total amount of the indemnities for States, companies, or societies, and private individuals, &c. It was propose to raise this money by way of a loan, principal and interest to be cleared off in thirty-nine years by a payment of 4 per cent. per annum on the total sum, the amortisation to commence on January 1, 1902, and to finish at the end of the year 1940. It was also decided that the regulation and service of this debt should take place not at Peking, but in Shanghai.

7. The Chinese Government agreed that the quarter occupied by the Legations in Peking should be specially reserved for their use and under their exclusive control, and that they should be at liberty to fortify it, and that Chinese should not have the right to reside therein. Each Power was to maintain a separate guard for the defence of its own Legations.

8. The Chinese Government consented to dismantle the forts at Taku.

9. The Powers were conceded the right to occupy certain points between Peking and the sea.

10. The Chinese Government agreed to publish edicts suppressing all anti-foreign societies and setting forth the death-sentences inflicted on the leading offenders in the recent rebellion.

11. China agreed to amend the commercial and navigation treaties existing with foreign Powers in certain details.

12. The Tsung-li-Yamen was reformed on lines indicated by the Powers. It now constitutes a ministry for foreign affairs under the title of Wai-Wu-Pu, and takes precedence over all the other ministries of state. The court ceremonials as to the reception of foreign representatives were modified, in accordance with the

desires of the Powers. Finally, the Powers guaranteed that "the international troops would completely evacuate the city of Peking on September 17, 1901"; and on that date the Japanese and American guards handed over the Forbidden City to the Chinese authorities.

It was thus that China was punished for the Boxer rebellion of 1900 and the assault upon the Legations. But the indemnity of £64,000,000 only represents a slight portion of the loss which she suffered. The destruction of the native property was incalculable, and the sufferings inflicted upon her own subjects were such as to be almost inconceivable to the citizens of the United Kingdom or any of the other civilised European nations.

The debt of £64,000,000 was secured upon the maritime and native customs, and upon salt, which is a Government monopoly. China had paid dearly for her whistle, but she could afford to discharge all her obligations. The yearly charge for her total indebtedness (£119,755,000) amounts only to £5,770,000—a sum which should be a mere trifle to a country so large, so rich, and so thickly populated, if the national administration were conducted on sound principles. The proceeds of the revenues allocated for the international indemnity are paid monthly to the Debt Commission at Shanghai, and by them conveyed to the national creditors.

The countries who made out bills against China for loss and expenses incurred in relieving Peking, or caused by the destruction of national and private property, were Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, and the United States. Every statement of claim presented was settled. Those sent in by Russia, Germany, and Italy were as unreasonable as those

presented by Great Britain, America, and Japan were moderate. Russia claimed £17,900,000 for "military expenses," M. de Giers basing his calculation on the maintenance of an army of 179,000 troops at £100 per man. The well-informed correspondent of *The Times* says of the Russian bill that it "claimed for more than 100,000 men who had no existence whatever. The real numbers placed by Russia in the field were less than 50,000."



THE GRAND DUKE SERGIUS.

[illegible]

[illegible]



M. POBIEDONOSTSEFF.

[illegible] Lord and God, Jesus Christ, has [illegible] the Orthodox [illegible] the Far East in the midst of populations which [illegible] the Dalai Lama.

CHAPTER X

Return of the Chinese Court to Peking—Death of Li-Hung-Chang—The position of France as Protector of Roman Catholic Missions in the East—The Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance.

ON October 7, 1901, the Emperor and Empress-Dowager and the entire Chinese Court started from Singanfu on the return journey to Peking. In that month also an Imperial decree was issued, with the sanction of the Empress Tszu-Hszi, depriving young Prince Chun of his position as heir-apparent and setting him aside, and thereby restoring the Emperor Kwang-Su to all his dignities. The return to Peking was not as speedily accomplished as the flight to Singanfu. The Chinese Court travelled reluctantly by easy stages from town to town, billeting itself upon the numerous municipalities; and on January 3, 1902, had only arrived at Cheng-Ting-Fu. In the interval the ablest living Chinaman, Li-Hung-Chang, had died, on November 7th, at Peking, where he had been waiting to receive his Imperial mistress. At Cheng-Ting-Fu the Imperial party were induced to entrust themselves to the train, and were thence conveyed by the Belgian Railway Company to Paoting-Fu, the provincial capital of the province of Chi-li, which had been sacked by the Germans. The ancient town must have presented a melancholy spectacle to the

Emperor and Empress-Dowager, but its dilapidation was trivial compared with the scene of destruction and desolation which awaited them in Peking.

On January 7th the entire court again took train and travelled from Paoting-Fu to Peking. Although the railway runs to the Chien-Men Gate of the Tartar City, directly opposite the palace, the Empress Tszu-Hszi ordered the train to be stopped at a considerable distance outside the terminus, and the entire court alighted. The Empress-Dowager and the Emperor then entered their chairs, and were carried in time-honoured Chinese style from thence to the capital. Their entry, though made under such disheartening circumstances, partook of the nature of a triumph; and all the Europeans then in Peking, who were present to show their respect to the returning sovereigns, were keenly touched at the spectacle. The crowds of devoted Manchus and stolid Chinese were delighted to see their ancient rulers restored to them; and, as the chairs of the Emperor and Empress were slowly borne along, surrounded by all the Chinese nobles and escorted by cavalry, the troops which lined the way on both sides knelt in homage while they presented arms. Out of consideration to the feelings of the Imperial family the ruins near the gate were covered with Chinese matting and otherwise hidden with decorations in bright colours. At the city gate the Emperor and Empress-Dowager left their chairs to burn incense at the temples, the hour selected for their arrival being considered the most propitious time of the day. Before re-entering her chair, the Empress Tszu-Hszi turned towards the foreign onlookers and made a deep bow to them.

Shortly after reaching the palace the Emperor Kwang-Su, alone, gave an audience to the foreign representatives, at which he made a short speech,

expressing his particular satisfaction at seeing Germany again represented at his court. Three weeks later another public reception of the whole diplomatic body was held at the palace, at which the daughter of the harem occupied the throne, and the Emperor sat on a low daïs in front of her. The relative positions of the sovereigns at these two receptions were regulated by the Board of Ceremonies, a body which, prior to the period of which we are now writing, had been regarded as perhaps the most important of the State departments. The Emperor, by appearing alone at the first reception, showed that he was still the Autocrat of China, the High Priest and Vicegerent of Heaven, and capable of acting alone. Having asserted this right, he chivalrously consented to occupy a subordinate place at the second reception, thereby showing that the Empress Tszu-Hszi still occupied her former position as Adviser of the Throne.

On February 1st the Empress Tszu-Hszi held a reception on her own account, at which all the ladies attached to the foreign Legations were personally presented to her. She received them most affably, and did not conceal the grief by which she was overwhelmed at the havoc wrought in Peking and the heavy loss inflicted on China. With genuine Chinese politeness she bewailed the wrong done to the Legations rather than the sufferings of her own people. The wife of the American envoy smartly contrived to be near the Imperial person when Tszu-Hszi was in a particularly melting mood and succeeded in becoming the recipient of a gift of "bracelets and rings taken from the Empress's own person"—a priceless trophy to carry home to Washington!

Amongst the many curious incidents which took place at this reception was the presentation at court of Sir Robert Hart, who had never received that

honour before, though he had been nearly fifty years resident in China and had been Inspector-General of Customs for almost forty years of that period. The Grand Duke Cyril of Russia was also presented with extraordinary ceremonial, and the Empress-Dowager conversed with him for a considerable time. It was also remarked that Tszu-Hszi entered into friendly conversation with Sir Robert Hart, thereby showing a due sense of the importance of the official whose duty it would be to enable China to meet her heavy obligations to the Powers.

Two Roman Catholic bishops were also presented to the Empress, thereby obtaining the highest recognition of their official status under the Franco-Chinese Convention of 1897, an event to which we shall now refer at some length; for the distinction thus conferred on these French bishops challenges the attention of all who wish to understand the contemporary history of China. It cannot have escaped the reader's notice how, during the Boxer riots, Sir Claude Macdonald gave it as his opinion that the French bishop in Peking "had by general admission the best sources of information." Nor will it have been forgotten how one of the Imperial decrees, issued at the beginning of the disturbances in 1900, laid stress upon "the ill-feeling stirred up by the interference of priests in litigation between Christians and non-Christians," in reference to which Sir Claude Macdonald said that he did not doubt that there was "a good deal of truth in the statement." The priests referred to were not native Chinese priests, but French, Belgian, and other priests belonging to the Roman Catholic Missions.

Now, while France and Russia work hand-in-hand in China, there is one cardinal difference in their methods. It cannot be denied that Russia's policy in China has been characterised by a uniformity of

disingenuousness, but she can at least claim the merit of having made no pretence of acting from religious motives. Pobiedonostseff's appeal to the Tsar, which will be discussed in a later chapter, is an exception which proves the rule, and finds no responsive echo in any of the diplomatic notes issued by Russian statesmen. If Russia could not acquire Manchuria by the specious promises of her foreign ministers, she was prepared, when a suitable opportunity presented itself, to have recourse to arms. Russia had frankly avowed, on more than one occasion, that she had no concern for missionaries and had declined to exert herself to avenge their massacre.

France, on the contrary, professes to have a mission to convert China to the Roman Catholic religion, and styles herself the Protector of Roman Catholic Missions in the East, irrespective of the nationality of the missionaries. There are, it appears, nearly 2,000 Roman Catholic priests in China and 1,000,000 native Roman Catholic converts; while it is stated that all the denominations of the Reformed Christian religions do not count more than a tenth of that number of converts in China. These figures are of some importance, inasmuch as a considerable amount of money is collected from the British public for the support of Missions in the Far East. Indeed, there is scarcely a Church Conference held in England at which a missionary from China does not hold forth for the edification of the audience.

The missionaries of the Church of England and of the other Christian countries occupy an insignificant position in China as compared with the Roman Catholic missionaries. But it would be unjust to censure them on that account, for it must be remembered that the Roman missions to China commenced three centuries before the Reformation.

In the middle of the thirteenth century two Franciscan friars from French Flanders, named Carpini and Rubruk, penetrated through Mongolia into China Proper. Their mission was as much commercial as it was religious, and their reports of the country were principally concerned with the excellence of Chinese craftsmen and the variety of the productions of China. These early missionaries were followed by other adventurers of the same kind, and towards the close of the thirteenth century the Roman Pope appointed a Franciscan friar, John of Monte Corvena, Archbishop of Peking. A well-staffed Roman Catholic Mission was then established in China, under the patronage of the successors of Jenghis Khan, and the connection between Rome and China has practically continued unbroken ever since.

The Chinese do not possess a religion, in the European sense of the word, and they are naturally tolerant of the religious beliefs of others, so long as they do not intermeddle with Chinese politics. There is no native priesthood in China, and, therefore, no organised religious class having a financial interest in opposing propagandism—as there is, for instance, in Russia.

There are degenerate species of Buddhism and Taoism in China, both of which sects possess a priesthood; but Confucianism stands on a plane above Chinese Buddhism and Taoism, with the result that the priests of the latter sects enjoy no public respect. Ancestor-worship and a reverence for the principles of the Chinese Constitution make up the Confucianism which is the Chinaman's religion, and there is, perhaps, no system of belief in the world more tolerant of the opinions of other people. There are, for instance, nearly thirty millions of Mahommedans in China with whom the Chinese are on the best of terms.

Such was the prevailing spirit of religious toleration in China when the early Roman Catholic Missions received a welcome, and such, in the main, it continues to be to the present day. There is nothing to prevent a Confucian from being also a Roman Catholic or a Mahommedan from his own point of view.

It was in comparatively recent years that the various Reformed Christian Churches of Europe and America established Missions in China—more especially since the treaty of 1860, under which full permission was given for the propagation of all forms of religion. But, having to compete against an organised body of Roman Catholic priests, their progress has necessarily been difficult. They have been accused in some quarters of adopting the Roman system of saint and image worship in order to win converts among ancestor-worshippers in China, and it is a very common thing nowadays to hear charges of Ritualism and Romanism formulated against the clergymen who are sent abroad by the leading missionary societies of the Church of England. But we shall not go into that aspect of the case, and we shall assume that they are doing what they consider to be the best under the circumstances.

The position of France with regard to the Roman Catholic missionary organisation in China seems, to the ordinary British citizen, to be no less disingenuous than Russia's policy in the Far East. At home we see France denouncing the *concordat* between herself and the papal priests at Rome. We see her expelling thousands of priests and nuns as bad citizens, whose influence tends to corrupt the mind of the French nation. The majority of the French Legislature and French people appear to have come to the conclusion, despite the desperate opposition and plausible pretences of the clerical party, that Roman Catholic

priestcraft is an evil to be banished from France like intemperance or contagious disease.

The French Government will not allow Roman Catholic priests to teach, because it believes that their doctrines are unhealthy, and detrimental to the national manhood. The attention of the world has been attracted in the most striking manner to the continued anti-clerical policy of the French Republic, the one guiding principle of which seems to be a determination that sacerdotalism, or trade in a perverted Christianity which the French people have ceased to believe in, must be at length suppressed like any other species of purely human fraud.

But when we come to examine the position of France in the Far East, we discover her styling herself Protector and Controller of Roman Catholic priestcraft! If a Belgian, Dutch, Spanish, or Italian Roman Catholic missionary gets into trouble, it is to France he must apply for protection, and it is France who must conduct with the Chinese Government all negotiations for redress; and it cannot be denied that the French Government utilises its assumed divine mission for trade purposes. They have aggrandised themselves in Tonking by its means, and have claimed a predominant voice in settling the affairs of China to which they are not otherwise entitled—as, for instance, in the Franco-Chinese agreement of 1898, in which they sought to shut off India and Burmah from the Yangtse Valley by acquiring an influence in Kwang-Si and Yunnan, and opposed the privilege conceded to ourselves of constructing a railway from Burmah to the Yangtse. It is not on military or political grounds that France bases her claim to dominate South China; for in 1884, the last occasion on which she went to war with the Chinese, she suffered a severe set-back, and was glad to conclude a convention in which she dropped her claim for an indemnity.

The religious suzerainty assumed by France has long been a source of irritation to China; and after the French check in 1884, China attempted to free herself from it by requesting the Pope to send a legate to Peking to represent the interests of the Roman Catholic Missions. But so valuable did the French Government consider their religious protectorship, that they threatened to withdraw the *concordat* with Rome if the papal priests should accede to China's suggestion and send a special envoy to Peking. Accordingly the Missions continued to remain under the protection of the Government of the Republic.

After the treaty of Shimonoseki, in 1895, France once again began to assert herself as the ally of Russia and Germany, and joined in forcing the Japanese to evacuate the Liao-Tong peninsula. And again, in 1896, taking advantage of China's prostration, she assumed her *rôle* of Protector of the Roman Catholic Missions, and obtained an agreement under which permission was given for Roman Catholic priests to purchase and possess real estate in any portion of China. And in 1897, while the Russians and Germans were worrying China in the North, France procured an Imperial decree conferring official status upon the bishops and priests of the Roman Catholic Church in China, bishops or vicars-apostolic being conceded a rank equivalent to that of Governors of Provinces, pro-vicars being given the status of *taotais*, or collectors of revenue, and judges.

Official status is a desirable asset in any country, but it is especially valuable in China, where undue importance is attached to all kinds of ceremonial, and where the gradations of the Civil Service are the only recognised distinctions of rank. Therefore, in the eyes of the ordinary Chinaman, the Roman Catholic priests, since the decree of 1897, have become Government

officials entitled to certain stated degrees of public deference, and enjoying this further advantage over the national officials, that they are shielded by France, and are independent of the Central Chinese Government.

The interference of priests in criminal cases all over China soon developed into a national nuisance, inasmuch as parties absconding from justice found refuge in the mission stations. In lawsuits between native Christians and ordinary Chinese citizens the priests have been presuming on their official status to interfere with the course of justice, and they frequently secure favourable decisions for their clients.

Thus it has come to pass that the Imperial decree of 1897 gave an immense lift to the Roman Catholic Missions, while it placed those of the Reformed Christian Churches at a greater disadvantage than before.

The position in which France finds herself is not logical—indeed, it is scarcely reputable. She is forcing upon the natives of China a religion which she herself believes to be obnoxious and detrimental to human character. She is fostering in China an organisation which she is expelling from France. She assumes the office of a Vicegerent of Christ in the Far East, while at the same moment she is banishing the emblem of Christ Crucified from all the schools and courts of justice in France itself. Such a course of conduct is not calculated to enhance general respect for the French Government, nor to induce the British people to place much reliance upon the good faith and stability of French character.

Having so far explained France's position in China, let us resume our narrative. The year 1902, as we have seen, opened auspiciously for the Imperial family and the existing *régime* in China. There were to be no reforms. The Powers evacuated Tientsin. Peace was

in the air, and there was a general tendency to forgive and forget. The German army had some battalions at Shanghai which they refused to withdraw, and the Russians were in Manchuria; but otherwise China was relapsing into its normal condition.

On calm consideration, now that the storm-clouds seemed to have blown over, the British public began to doubt whether this country had increased her influence in China during the period of four years from January, 1898, to January, 1902. Germany, Russia, Japan, and even America, had gained some material advantage in the Far East; but, with the exception of a slight extension of our boundaries at Hong Kong, our position was not improved. In justice to those charged with the protection of British interests, it must not be forgotten that we had, in the interval, established permanent peace and prosperity in Egypt, and had consolidated our influence in that important country. And, above all, we had conquered the Boers and made our own of South Africa. Never before, perhaps, had all our forces been so actively employed as they had been during the four years under review. It may be a moot question whether our labours in South Africa will prove ultimately profitable to us, but there is no use now in questioning the wisdom of our action in that quarter of the world.

In refutation of the statement that we had not improved our position in China, it may be advanced that we had gained Wei-hai-wei; but even that consolation was taken from us on February 10, 1902, when the Government declared in both Houses of Parliament that Wei-hai-wei was worthless, that all ideas of fortifying it had been abandoned, and that it would be useful to us only as a sanatorium for our forces in the Far East.

It was while the depression of spirits engendered by

this intelligence, coupled with the prospect of heavy taxation, lay sorely upon us that the prediction made by the *Cologne Gazette*, in January, 1898, was verified; and on February 12, 1902, a formal announcement was made by our Government of the conclusion of an offensive and defensive alliance with Japan. The negotiations for this famous treaty had been in progress for a year, and it spoke well for the discretion of statesmen on both sides that no information concerning it had contrived to leak out.

The Germans, it is true, appear to have had early information of a contemplated alliance, but the long interval which had elapsed between the prophecy and its fulfilment had caused the public to forget the prediction of the *Cologne Gazette*. The reader of this brief history cannot fail to have noticed the energy, competence, and self-control displayed by Japan during the trying period from 1895 to the beginning of 1902. She proved herself by her conduct to be worthy of being rated as one of the world's great Powers. Her promises were always kept. Her military and naval forces comported themselves with unsurpassed courage and efficiency, as modest and self-contained in the hour of victory as they were patient and resolute at seasons of momentary defeat. Those who are most competent to speak on the subject give the highest praise to the Japanese guards during the siege of the Legations at Peking; and the same authorities consider that no commendation could be excessive in describing the behaviour of the Japanese troops during the relief of the Chinese capital and its subsequent occupation.

Nevertheless, our statesmen required not a little strength of mind to enter into an alliance on terms of equality with a nation differing so fundamentally from us in race and traditions, a Power whose sudden

rise to eminence has been so volcanic. But if the alliance redounds to the credit of the English statesmen, it also bears eloquent testimony to the sagacious foresight of the Mikado and his advisers; for, if it has strengthened our position in the East, it has also immeasurably enhanced the influence of Japan. The extension of Russian autocracy into Manchuria, Korea, and China would have been fatal to all the historic ambitions of Japan. But if Japan had declared war against Russia, without having first come to an understanding with Great Britain, France would have undoubtedly proclaimed herself on the side of Russia, and the French fleet would have effectually prevented a Japanese invasion of the mainland. It is impossible to think that Germany would have done otherwise than throw in her lot with Russia and France; and a second period of pandemonium would have ensued in the Far East, during which China would have been partitioned, and we should have been compelled (1) to play a dishonourable part by siding with Russia, France, and Germany; or (2) to declare war against one or more first-rate European Powers; or (3) to stand idly by and see our influence in China wrested from us.

Japan would have been overwhelmed in such an eventuality, her own territory would probably be invaded, and, instead of carrying the war into the enemy's country, she would have had to fight for her existence on her own soil. An alliance with the greatest naval Power in the world made Japan's position impregnable for offensive operations against Russia. It seems highly improbable now that the permanent occupation of Korea and the Liao-Tong peninsula by Japan, after the manner of the British occupation of Egypt, should prove anything but beneficial to this country's interests in the Far East.

The following is the full text of the remarkable document known as the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance, by virtue of which Japan's *status* as a great Power was formally acknowledged for the first time, and under which Asia once again acquired a voice in the politics of the world :—

I. The High Contracting Parties, having mutually recognised the independence of China and Korea, declare themselves to be entirely uninfluenced by any aggressive tendencies in either country. Having in view, however, their special interests, of which those of Great Britain relate particularly to China, while Japan, in addition to the interests which she possesses in China, is interested in a particular degree politically, as well as commercially and industrially, in Korea, the High Contracting Parties recognise that it will be admissible for either of them to take such measures as may be indispensable in order to safeguard those interests, if threatened either by the aggressive action of any other Power or by disturbances arising in China or Korea, and necessitating the intervention of either of the High Contracting Parties for the protection of the lives and property of its subjects.

II. If either Great Britain or Japan, in defence of their respective interests as above described, should become involved in war with another Power, the other High Contracting Party will maintain a strict neutrality and use its efforts to prevent other Powers from joining in hostilities against its ally.

III. If, in the above event, any other Power or Powers should join in hostilities against that ally, the other High Contracting Party will come to its assistance and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.

IV. The High Contracting Parties agree that neither of them will, without consulting the other, enter into

separate agreements with another Power to the prejudice of the interests above described.

V. Whenever, in the opinion of Great Britain or Japan, the above-mentioned interests are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly.

VI. This agreement comes into force at once and remains in force for five years, and, if not denounced at the end of the fourth year, remains in force until one year after being denounced by either party. But if, when the date fixed for its expiration arrives, either ally is actually engaged in war, the alliance shall, *ipso facto*, continue until peace is concluded.

When our Government communicated the terms of this treaty of alliance to the Powers, the first notable result was that France and Russia, instead of replying individually, sent a joint answer, acknowledging our note, expressing no disapproval, and "reserving to themselves the means of protecting their interests." The Germans set to work at once to coerce China into signing an agreement that no other Power should get any special privileges in the Yangtse Valley; and during the rest of the year 1902 they kept a strong force of troops at Shanghai and refused to withdraw them, unless China consented to give them the desired undertaking. They wanted a ratification of the interpretation which they had put upon the Anglo-German agreement of 1900; and China, in order to relieve herself of the presence of the German soldiery, is said to have given the required guarantee. Prince Ching denied that anything had been done in depreciation of the guarantee already given to Great Britain with reference to the Yangtse region; but the Germans were satisfied that they had gained their point, and there seems no well-founded reason to believe that they were deceived.

CHAPTER XI

Differences between Russia and Japan—Alexieff appointed Viceroy—The Tsar's reception of the ambassadors—Russia procrastinates—Japan prepares for war—Meeting of the British Parliament.

THE evacuation of Shanghai was accomplished in January, 1903, as soon as the Germans signified their willingness to move. All the Powers had then withdrawn their troops from Chinese territory, with the exception of Russia; and the Powers made representations to the Tsar's Government to withdraw its troops from Manchuria. Russia's reply was a promise to do so in the next ensuing April. But the month of April came and went, and still the Russian forces remained in Manchuria. In June, General Kuropatkin, the Russian Minister of War, visited Tokio, where he was received in the most friendly manner by the Mikado and the Japanese Government. He was entertained at dinner, and received many other tokens of public courtesy, and in reply made the fairest promises to Japan, and gave assurances of the *bona fides* of Russia's intentions in Manchuria and Korea. Viewed in the light of subsequent events, it now seems clear that Kuropatkin went to Japan partly in expectation that such condescension would soften the Japanese into submitting to the designs of Russia, and partly for the purpose of measuring that country's



GENERAL KUROPATKIN.

(Photo, Levitsky, St. Petersburg.)

"I do not intend to sacrifice needlessly a single man. We shall operate in great masses. To give the Japanese a lesson, we shall make a little promenade in their island after having crushed them in Korea and Manchuria. If I have anything to say in the matter, we shall sign the treaty of peace in Tokio and nowhere else." p. 160

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resources and personally studying the character of her public men.

Soon after Kuropatkin had left Japan, his pacific speeches were followed by hostile acts, first in Manchuria and subsequently in Korea. On June 29, 1903, "under the pretext of a trial transportation on the Siberian Railway, Russia sent to China two infantry brigades, two artillery battalions, a body of cavalry, and military trains"[1]; and from and after that date Russia continued to despatch troops to the Far East.

At this period Japan was disposed to negotiate with Russia, and seemed to hope that war would prove unnecessary. On August 12, 1903, the Japanese Ambassador at St. Petersburg submitted to the Tsar's Government a draft note, as a basis of mutual agreement, in which the points in dispute were arranged under five heads:—

1. A mutual engagement to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Chinese and Korean empires.

2. A mutual engagement to maintain the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in those two countries.

3. Reciprocal recognition of Japan's preponderating interests in Korea, and Russia's special interests in railway enterprises in Manchuria, and mutual recognition of the right of Japan and of Russia respectively to take such measures as may be necessary for the protection of those interests without infringing upon the integrity of China or Korea.

4. Recognition by Russia of the exclusive right of Japan to give advice and assistance to Korea in the interests of reform and good government in that country.

5. An engagement by Russia to permit an extension

[1] Japanese official statement, March 4, 1904.

of the Korean railway across Southern Manchuria, so as to connect with the East China, Shanhaikwan, and Niuchwang lines.[1]

This was tantamount to a declaration that Japan would not interfere with Russia in Manchuria, if Russia refrained from interference with Japan in Korea. The Japanese further expressed their willingness that the conferences on the memorandum should take place at St. Petersburg, so that "the solution of the situation might be expedited as much as possible." The Tsar's Government treated the proposition with contemptuous indifference, and appear to have come to the conclusion that Japan was afraid of them, and would not fight. They alleged that the Tsar was so busy about his contemplated State visits to France and Germany that they had no time to consider the Japanese proposals at St. Petersburg. They have had ample reason since then to regret their folly; but at that time they seemed to think the tide of prosperity was floating them on to supremacy in the Far East. And they gave the most effectual reply possible to the Japanese memorandum by their acts in Manchuria. The note was received at St. Petersburg on August 12th; and on the following day the busy Tsar, misinterpreting the conciliatory tone of the Japanese request for negotiations, proclaimed with great pomp that the Amur Province and Kwang-Tung district of Manchuria, leased from China, and including the Liao-Tong peninsula, should henceforth be "consolidated and erected into a special Vice-Royalty," and that its Governor should bear the title of "Viceroy of the Far East."

Admiral Alexieff, the individual selected for promotion to this important new position, was invested with

[1] Official statement issued by Japanese Legation in London, February, 1904.

supreme authority in all civil and military affairs, and was also appointed commander of the Pacific Fleet. The new Viceroy was, in fact, elevated to a position of quasi-independence, and was, to a considerable extent, outside the control of the Russian Government; with the result that it was very difficult to bring his actions within the purview of regular diplomacy. Alexieff was at liberty to pursue a high-handed career of aggression, involving breach of undertakings and violation of treaties, while, at the same time, the Russian Foreign Minister could disclaim responsibility for the Viceroy's acts. That was how Russia kept her promise to the Powers to evacuate Manchuria in April, and her subsequent promises made to Japan in June, 1903. Having proclaimed Alexieff Viceroy of the Far East in August, Russia condescended to announce in September that the treaty port of Niu-chwang, before referred to, and Mukden, the capital of Manchuria, would be evacuated on October 8th.

In the interval discussions on the Japanese memorandum had been taking place at Tokio. But, says the Japanese official statement, "it was not until October 3rd that the Russian Government presented any sober-minded counter-proposals"—and these were unsatisfactory. Russia (1) declined to pledge herself to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China; (2) declined to concede equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China; (3) demanded that Japan should declare Manchuria and its littoral as being entirely outside her sphere of interest; and (4) put several restrictions upon Japan's freedom of action in Korea.

On October 30, 1903, "the Japanese Government finally presented to the Russian Government their definite amendments"[1] to the Russian counter-pro-

[1] Japanese official statement.

posals; but Russia ignored these amendments. The Japanese "frequently urged the Russian Government for a reply, which was again and again delayed, and was only delivered on December 11, 1903."

While months were thus being deliberately wasted by Russia she was strengthening her position in Manchuria. The promised 8th of October had long since passed by, but she had not evacuated Mukden or Niuchwang. On the contrary, she despatched vast bodies of troops from Europe to Manchuria; and, as if to distract attention from her breaches of faith, she had commenced a career of dictation and interference in the kingdom of Korea, the integrity of which she had bound herself to respect by countless promises to all the Powers.

The River Yalu separates Manchuria and the district of Kwang-Tung, including the Liao-Tong peninsula, from the kingdom of Korea. The Russians crossed this boundary river, laid down a telegraph on the Korean side, and established a Russian settlement at Yongampho, in Korean territory, between the important town of Wichu and the river's mouth. Japan wished to lay a line of telegraph from Seoul, the Korean capital, to Fusan, the Korean port nearest to Japan. The Russians had opposed and effectually prevented the laying down of that telegraph. The Japanese had proposed that the Korean port of Wichu, on the Yalu River, should be opened to the trade of all foreign nations. Russia successfully opposed the proposition, and her settlement at Yongampho stood peremptorily between Wichu and the mouth of the Yalu. Her aggression in Korea was manifestly meant to distract the attention of the Powers from her continued occupation of Manchuria. Russia, absolutely confident in the strength of her own position, ignored ourselves completely,

and treated the remonstrances of Japan with contempt.

By this time she had fortified Port Arthur and Dalny, having recently spent £1,350,000 on Port Arthur, while £1,300,000 was expended on Dalny during the year 1903. She was erecting a line of forts which, when completed, would form a continuous chain of coast fortification, thirty-five miles in length. She practically discarded even the pretence of keeping her engagement to withdraw from Manchuria. Nor did there seem to be any sufficient reason why she should do so. Her star seemed to be in the ascendant. The Tsar successfully paid his State visits of ostentatious friendliness to France and Germany, and, in the opinion of Europe, seemed to have won the approval of these Powers for the Russian policy in China. Alexieff, the Viceroy of the Far East, held a review of Russian troops at Port Arthur, at which, we are told, no less than 21,000 men appeared on the parade ground.

The issue between Russia and Japan was now knit. No other Power in Europe, Asia, or America, save Japan alone, was in a position to resist the overweening pretensions of Russia in the Far East.

In its tardy reply, delivered on December 11th, the Russian Government "suppressed the clause relating to Manchuria, so as to make the proposed convention entirely Korean." The Japanese Government delivered no formal rejoinder, but "asked the Russian Government to reconsider the question." On January 6, 1904, the Russians sent another reply to this rejoinder, and seemed prepared to play an interminable game of warfare by despatch, at a range of four thousand miles, provided only that Japan consented to allow them to consolidate their forces in Manchuria in the meantime. France and Germany were definitely on the side of

Russia. In its last reply to Japan the Tsar's Government requested the Japanese to recognise a Russian protectorate in Manchuria, and submitted the following clause for a proposed agreement: "Recognition by Japan of Manchuria and its littoral as being outside her sphere of interests." If Japan consented to this, Russia would not, within the limits of that province, "impede Japan or other Powers in the enjoyment of rights and privileges acquired by them under existing treaties with China, *exclusive of the establishment of settlements.*"

It was as if Great Britain had asked the other Powers to allow her to occupy and annex the entire province of Kwang-tung, extending on both sides of the mouth of the Canton River, or the province of Che-Kiang at the mouth of the Yangtse, offering the Powers in return for this acquiescence that "any rights and privileges acquired by them under existing treaties with China, *exclusive of the establishment of settlements,* should not be interfered with!"

On January 13th the Japanese Government "renewed their request to the Russians to reconsider the question," and urged them "to send an early reply." No business man could fail to understand the drift of such a reiterated request. The Japanese procedure was absolutely correct from a business point of view, whereas the Russian methods were those of a Holy Synod official playing with a credulous votary until the moment should arrive to pass sentence for heresy.

This last request to Russia to reconsider her position was delivered on January 13th, and Nicholas and his advisers took immediate action, after their own peculiar style. They did not face the difficulty, for Russian Grand Dukes despise business methods. They held a reception of the diplomatic body at St. Petersburg on the next day, January 14, 1904, and the Tsar,

enduing himself with the harmlessness of a dove, addressed the Japanese minister, M. Kurino, "very cordially," and "emphasised the high value which he placed upon good neighbourly relations with Japan, not only at the present time, but also in the future."

But Nicholas was reckoning without his host. He had now to deal with a new world-power, whose leaders were no longer to be deceived by hollow professions, invariably followed up by treacherous action. The Mikado and his advisers at home rightly interpreted the Tsar's protestations of good-will for what they really meant, and that was nothing more than Russia's unreadiness to fight. What a pitiable position the descendant of Peter the Great seems to have occupied at that reception—a position comparable in many respects to that of his imperial brother, Kwang-Su, the Son of Heaven, at a *levée* of foreign representatives at Peking!

He addressed Mr. McCormack, the United States Ambassador, and expressed his desire that America and Japan "should live on the terms of intimate and cordial relationship which had subsisted for so many years"—an empty profession which must have sounded in Mr. McCormack's ears like the crackling of thorns under a pot, when he remembered the opposition of Russia to the expansion of American trade at Korean and Manchurian ports.

The Tsar did not deem our ambassador worthy of special notice on that occasion. One can see the assembled diplomatists eagerly scanning the pallid countenance of Nicholas, his tremulous lip and shifty glance, when he addressed them collectively and said: "I desire and intend to do all in my power to maintain peace in the Far East." His words, they must have known, had no meaning, were merely *vox et præterea nihil.*

It was widely believed on the Continent that Russia

did not mean to go to war, and therefore that war would not take place. The Tsar, in fact, had assumed his most picturesque pose before the world, in his favourite *rôle* of the Apostle of Peace. But, on the same day that Nicholas was endeavouring to soften the diplomatists in St. Petersburg, Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, had been reviewing his troops at Port Arthur. Alexieff's reviews, however, if one may use a gambling metaphor, were nothing more than bluff, for evidence continued to accumulate which proved that Russia was increasingly reluctant to draw the sword as the time for an *ultimatum* drew near.

Prince Ching suggested to the French, British, and American ministers at Peking that they should mediate between Japan and Russia,[1] and Prince Ching did not deny that "the suggestion to invite the mediation of other Powers came from the Russian minister."

At the end of January the Japanese Government informed the Russian minister at Tokio that sufficient time had elapsed for a reply to Japan's last note, and that no reply had been received.

While these verbal and literary passages-at-arms were proceeding, Japan was not idle. At the end of December the Mikado's Government purchased two cruisers, which had just been finished at Genoa to the order of the Argentine Government, for the sum of £1,500,000, and ten British officers and 120 seamen were despatched to assist in the navigation of the ships on their voyage from Genoa to Japan. The Japanese also continued to pursue their policy of commercial development in Korea, and guaranteed a loan of £2,000,000 for the railway between Fusan and Seoul; and, moreover, a special Council of War, endowed with the fullest discretion and unlimited credit, was meeting daily at Tokio.

[1] *The Times*, January 25, 1904.

The Japanese fleet was at its post and ready for action, its strength being six first-class battleships, eight armoured cruisers, and fourteen protected cruisers. It was not much stronger than the Russian fleet, but it had been in action during the Chinese War, and had proved itself a wonderfully effective implement under the direction of officers who had won the admiration of experts of every nationality. The Japanese permanent army was estimated at 7,500 officers and 190,000 men, the reserve and the territorial army at 230,000 officers and men, giving Japan a total possible force of 400,000 officers and men and 90,000 horses.

The Russians, too, were making preparations, though they did not anticipate war. Enormous bodies of troops, estimated at 200,000 men, were in Manchuria, or on the way thither; and Russia's Pacific Fleet had been strengthened, so that it now comprised eight first-class battleships, five armoured cruisers, and eight protected cruisers, one of the most formidable squadrons ever maintained in Eastern waters. The Russian land forces, prior to these events, used to be considered as almost illimitable in numbers, but the base of Russian operations was over 4,000 miles away from the seat of war, whereas Japan's base was close at hand. Japan possessed, it is true, dockyards for the repair of her fleet, and a well-organised transport service for conveying her troops to the mainland. But the Russian troops were already on the mainland, and the Russian navy was on the watch to prevent the transport thither of the Japanese forces. The Russian minister in Korea was endeavouring to coerce the Korean Government into giving Russia a lease of Masampho, the port in Southern Korea which Russia endeavoured to acquire in 1900, and in which both Russia and Japan had established settlements in 1901.

The distrust for Russia throughout the English-speaking world had now become general, and it was growing increasingly clear that at length her disingenuous despatches had ceased to be an effective weapon in the hands of her diplomatists. France and Germany sympathised with her, it is true, but English and American opinion was unanimously on the side of Japan. Even China was beginning to show activity, more especially in the central districts, outside the sphere of Russian influence. Japanese agents were to be found everywhere. Drilling and other military preparations prevailed at Nanking. Chinese cruisers were arming at Shanghai. Volunteers from Canada and elsewhere in America were offering themselves for service with the Japanese; but Japan seemed disposed to act on the advice of Herbert Spencer, which was that her policy should be "that of keeping Americans and Europeans as much as possible at arm's length."[1]

Public distrust of Russia was finding vigorous expression in America. The United States Government had addressed a note to all the Powers asking them to guarantee the neutrality and integrity of China. A leading American newspaper[2] said it was "not a question between Russia and Japan alone, but a question between Russia and all mankind. It was against the interests of the world when France and Germany expelled Japan from Liao-Tong, her rightful conquest by war, and when England acquiesced, only to see this peninsula seized by Russia herself. For whereas Japan took possession of the peninsula to let all mankind in, Russia has taken possession of it to keep all mankind out."

Marquis Ito's son-in-law, Baron Suyematsu, who had just arrived in England from America, truly stated

[1] Letter to Baron Kaneko, August 13, 1892.
[2] *New York Times.*

that the war "was to be ascribed to the general revolt of all the civilised peoples of the earth against the perfidy and insincerity of Russia, who for many years had sought to outwit the other Powers."

The general condition of things in China was somewhat improved. The Empress-Dowager continued to have the leading voice in the government of the country, and that daughter of the harem now empowered the eunuch, Li, who was one of her *confidants*, to procure a loan of £200,000 from the Russo-Chinese bank to complete the railway from Peking to Kalgan, the object being to establish direct communication with the Trans-Siberian Railway, and thereby give Russia a direct road to Peking. The official classes in China seemed to be in favour of Russia, believing that her ascendancy in Manchuria was a guarantee against Japanese invasion and all administrative reforms; but the populace favoured Japan.

The Korean minister in London now made a public statement to the effect that "the proposals put forward by Japan with reference to Korea were much more favourable to his country than were those which had been formulated by the Government of the Tsar." He did not anticipate war. His Government were in favour of opening the ports of Wichu and Yongampho. But in the event of war Korea would maintain "the strictest neutrality." The view taken by the majority of British citizens at this stage was well expressed by *The Times:* "It must be remembered that if this war begins the whole question of the balance of power in the Far East will be at stake. We could not afford to see the dominion of the Far East pass into the hands of a single Power (Russia) which is not friendly to us. Our duty to our trade, to India, to Australia, to all our possessions in the Pacific

and on its further shore, forbid it. We could not look on and see Japan obliterated, or permanently reduced to the rank of a second-rate Power."

The Japanese Legation at Seoul being now protected by two hundred guards, Russia sent a similar number to protect her Legation, and the other Powers also procured guards. The Korean Government was said to be in favour of Russia, and the Emperor of Korea, in declaring the port of Wichu open to trade, said that he did so *subject to the approval of China*, thereby apparently reviving the Chinese suzerainty. He may have been led to believe that Russia would assuredly crush Japan.

Japan now significantly impressed upon the Chinese minister at Tokio that she expected China (1) to preserve order everywhere in the Chinese Empire; (2) to protect foreigners of every nationality resident in the interior; (3) to take especial measures for the preservation of order in the province of Shantung, subject to German influence, and in the province of Yunnan, subject to French influence, lest Germany and France should seize the pretext of civil disturbance and land troops on Chinese soil. The wisdom of Japan in sending this solemn warning to China is apparent; for if French and German troops were landed, they would have thrown their influence into the Russian side of the scale, and a period of riot, plunder, and bloodshed would have ensued, during which China would have been partitioned.

Another ominous sign of the times was the enormous demand for Welsh coal which now arose for the Far East, with the result that fortunes were being made by the mine-owners, shippers, and underwriters, freights from Cardiff to Hong Kong having risen from 16s. 6d. to 25s. per ton in the early part of January.

At the beginning of February, Japan had not yet

received the expected reply to her note. The Russian and Continental newspapers were full of vapid rumour and speculation, all seeming to entertain a belief that Russian diplomacy would once more cajole Japan, as it had so often cajoled other Powers in the Far East.

Parliament met on February 2nd, and King Edward VII. in his speech from the throne made the following allusion to the threatened rupture between Russia and Japan: "I have watched with concern the course of the negotiations between the Governments of Japan and Russia in regard to their respective interests in China and Korea. A disturbance of the peace in those regions could not but have deplorable consequences. Any assistance which my Government can usefully render towards the promotion of a pacific solution will be gladly offered." In the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne said, in answer to a query from Lord Spencer, that "we had not been invited to mediate, and it was an open secret that one at least of the disputants had intimated plainly that mediation was not sought at the present time." The disputant referred to was, of course, Japan, who was determined in the light of past experience to accept no more promises from Russian "diplomatists."

Our Prime Minister, Mr. A. J. Balfour, at this difficult crisis, was confined to his bedroom, where he remained for several weeks—incapacitated, there can be no question, but apparently not seriously ill—and was, therefore, absent from the House at the opening of Parliament. The *personnel* of the Government had been vitally changed during the recess; we were on the eve of one of the greatest events of all time, in which unborn generations of Britishers should have an incalculable interest; but we had nothing to say as to our position. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, representing the Liberal Party, refrained from commenting

on the situation in the Far East, "as it was so very critical," confessing that "the whole situation was bewildering; familiar faces were found in strange places and strange faces in familiar places." Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking for the Government, said "he could not usefully say anything at present about the critical state of affairs."

Lord Rosebery, one of the shrewdest of Foreign Ministers, humorously pointed out some months later—when, on another critical occasion, the Prime Minister had once again become an invalid—that "when Mr. Balfour went to bed the Government went to bed."

Anxiety, coupled with a feeling of suppressed indignation with the Government, was widespread. The writer remembers being at a dinner in a fashionable house in the West End of London at which a political conversation took place between some exceptionally well-informed noblemen and commoners. Amongst those who joined in it was a doctor with a very large practice in London, a busy and highly capable man.

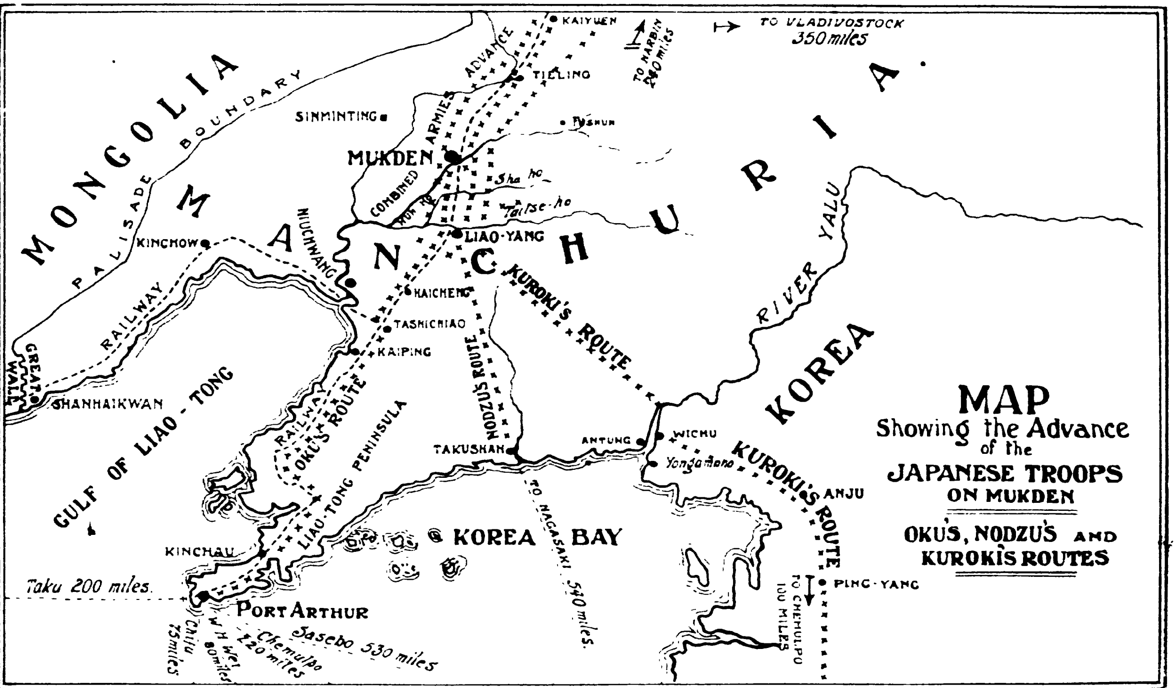
"There is not a member of the present Government, except the lawyers," I remember him declaring with contemptuous emphasis, "who could earn £300 a year on his merits, if he had to make his living"!

The difficulty is to get eminently able men to give up their own business to attend to that of the nation. A man must have a considerable private fortune in order to do so; and those who are so blessed are not always the most capable.

BOOK II

1904 AND 1905 A.D.

"Jiujutsu is not an art of display at all; it is an art of self-defence in the most exact sense of the term; it is an art of war. The master of that art is able, in one moment, to put an untrained antagonist completely *hors de combat*. By some terrible legerdemain he suddenly dislocates a shoulder, unhinges a joint, bursts a tendon, or snaps a bone—without any apparent effort. He is much more than an athlete; he is an anatomist. And he knows also touches that kill, as by lightning. . . . The art of jiujutsu teaches you to rely for victory solely upon the strength of your opponent; and the greater his strength, the worse for him and the better for you. . . . The very name, 'jiujutsu,' means to conquer by yielding."—LAFCADIO HEARN in *Out of the East*.


MAP
Showing the Advance
of the
JAPANESE TROOPS
ON MUKDEN
OKU'S, NODZU'S AND
KUROKI'S ROUTES
MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA
KOREA
PALISADE BOUNDARY
TO VLADIVOSTOCK 350 miles
TO HARBIN 240 miles
KAIYUEN
TIELING
FUSHUN
SINMINTING
MUKDEN
COMBINED ARMIES ADVANCE
Sha ho
Taitse-ho
LIAO-YANG
NIUCHWANG
KINCHOW
HAICHENG
TASHICHIAO
KAIPING
RAILWAY
GREAT WALL
SHANHAIKWAN
GULF OF LIAO-TONG
LIAO-TONG PENINSULA
OKU'S ROUTE
NODZU'S ROUTE
KUROKI'S ROUTE
RIVER YALU
TAKUSHAN
ANTUNG
WICHU
ANJU
PING-YANG
TO CHEMULPO 100 MILES
KOREA BAY
TO NAGASAKI 540 miles.
KINCHAU
PORT ARTHUR
Taku 200 miles.
Chifu 75 miles
W H Wei 80 miles
Chemulpo 220 miles
Sasebo 530 miles

CHAPTER XII

Japanese attack on the Port Arthur Fleet—The Chemulpo sea-fight—Declaration of war between Japan and Russia—Alexieff's proclamation—Kuropatkin appointed Commander-in-Chief—Makaroff appointed to command the fleet—Japanese attempt to seal Port Arthur—Stoessel's proclamation—Japanese Army lands in Korea.

ON Saturday, February 5, 1904, Japan broke off diplomatic relations with Russia, no reply having been received to the Japanese note of January 13th. On the following day, Sunday, February 6th, the Russian Government telegraphed thus to all its representatives abroad: "At the instance of his Government, the Japanese minister at the Imperial Court has handed a note bringing to the notice of the Imperial Government the decision of Japan to cease further negotiations, and to recall her minister and the whole staff of her mission from St. Petersburg. In consequence of this it has been agreeable to the Sovereign Emperor to command that the Russian minister in Tokio, with the entire staff of the Imperial mission, shall leave forthwith. The action of the Japanese Government, which did not await even the handing to it of the answer of the Imperial Government despatched to it during the last few days, imposes on Japan the entire responsibility for the consequences which may result from the breaking off of diplomatic relations between the two Empires."

The statement that the answer to Japan's note had been "despatched to it during the last few days" is not worthy of credence. If Russia now imagined that Japan was going to rest content with merely "breaking off diplomatic relations," she was destined to be rudely undeceived.

Within three days Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, sent the following alarming telegram to the Emperor Nicholas: "I most devotedly inform your Majesty that about midnight between February 8th and 9th Japanese torpedo-boats delivered a sudden mine attack on the squadron lying in the Chinese roads at Port Arthur, the battleships *Retvisan* and *Tsarevitch* and the cruiser *Pallada* being holed." On the next day the Tsar had a further message from Alexieff: "A Japanese squadron, consisting of fifteen battleships and cruisers, to-day began to bombard Port Arthur. In the course of the battle the battleship *Poltava* and the cruisers *Diana*, *Askold*, and *Novik* were each damaged on the water-line."

That was Japan's answer to the hollow professions of the Tsar to the diplomatic corps, and the treacherous conduct of his deputies in Korea and Manchuria.

It was considered smart diplomacy, on Russia's part, to represent Japan as having commenced hostilities, but Admiral Togo's bombardment of Port Arthur was not really the first act of war. Togo's first gun was not fired until midnight on February 8th; but in the early portion of the same day a Japanese squadron, escorting transports into Chemulpo, encountered the Russian gunboat *Korietz* as she was coming out of that port.

"The *Korietz* took up an offensive attitude towards the Japanese vessels and fired upon the Japanese torpedo boats. The latter discharged two torpedoes but without effect. Then the *Korietz* returned to her

anchorage at the port."[1] The first shot in the war, therefore, appears to have been fired by Russia, and it was not until the midnight of that day that Admiral Togo began to bombard Port Arthur.

There was another Russian warship, the *Variag*, in the harbour at Chemulpo in which the *Korietz* had taken refuge, as well as several foreign men-of-war. "Early on the next morning, February 9th," says the official Japanese despatch, "Admiral Uriu, commanding the Japanese squadron, formally called upon the Russian men-of-war to leave Chemulpo before noon on the same day. The admiral added that if his demand were not complied with he would be compelled to attack them in the harbour.

"The two Russian men-of-war left the port at about 11.30 a.m. and a battle then ensued outside the Polynesian Islands. After about an hour's engagement the Russian men-of-war took refuge among the islands.

"Towards the evening the Russian cruiser *Variag* sank, and about 4 a.m. on the morning of February 10th the *Korietz* was reported to have also sunk, having blown up. The officers and men of the two sunken vessels took refuge in the French cruiser *Pascal*. No casualties on the Japanese side."

The Japanese troops, consisting of four battalions, were then landed without opposition at Chemulpo. These were the prompt measures taken by the Mikado to inform the Tsar, in his fool's paradise at St. Petersburg, that written or verbal lies could no longer pass current in Japan.

On February 10th the Mikado issued his formal declaration of war: "We, by the Grace of Heaven, the Emperor of Japan, seated on the Throne occupied by the same dynasty from time immemorial, do hereby

[1] Official despatch.

make proclamation to all our loyal and brave subjects as follows :—

"We hereby declare war against Russia, and we command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against her in obedience to duty and with all their strength, and we also command all our competent authorities to make every effort in pursuance of their duties and in accordance with their powers to attain the national aim, with all the means within the limits of the law of nations."

And the Imperial rescript went on as follows: "We have always deemed it essential to international relations and made it our constant aim to promote the pacific progress of our Empire in civilisation, to strengthen our friendly ties with other states, and to establish a state of things which would maintain enduring peace in the Extreme East, and assure the future security of our Dominion without injury to the rights and interests of the other Powers.

"Our competent authorities have also performed their duties in obedience to our will, so that our relations with all Powers have been steadily growing in cordiality.

"It was thus entirely against our expectation that we have unhappily come to open hostilities against Russia.

"The integrity of Korea is a matter of gravest concern to this Empire, not only because of our traditional relations with that country, but because the separate existence of Korea is essential to the safety of our realm.

"Nevertheless Russia, in disregard of her solemn treaty pledges to China, and of her repeated assurances to other Powers, is still in occupation of Manchuria, and has consolidated and strengthened her hold upon those provinces, and is bent upon their final annexation.

"And since the absorption of Manchuria by Russia would render it impossible to maintain the integrity of China, and would, in addition, compel the abandonment of all hope for peace in the Extreme East, we determined, in those circumstances, to settle the question by negotiations and to secure thereby a permanent peace.

"With that object in view, our competent authorities by our order made proposals to Russia, and frequent conferences were held during the last six months.

"Russia, however, never met such proposals in a spirit of conciliation, but by her wanton delays put off the settlement of the serious question, and by ostensibly advocating peace on the one hand, while she was on the other extending her naval and military preparations, sought to accomplish her own selfish designs.

"We cannot in the least admit that Russia had from the first any serious or genuine desire for peace. She has rejected the proposals of our Government. The safety of Korea is in danger. The interests of our Empire are menaced. The guarantees for the future which we have failed to secure by peaceful negotiations can now only be obtained by an appeal to arms.

"It is our earnest wishes that by the loyalty and faith of our faithful subjects peace may be permanently restored and the glory of our Empire preserved."

On the following day, at Tokio, a banquet took place at the palace, over which the Mikado presided. The occasion was the celebration of the 2,564th anniversary of the accession of the Emperor Jimiri, first monarch of Japan. At this celebration abundant evidence was given of the firm resolution and great common sense of the Mikado, as well as of the complete harmony which prevailed between him and his entire people.

"Upon the occasion of this memorable anniversary," said the Mikado, "it gives me great pleasure to entertain the foreign representatives, ministers, officers, and distinguished persons. It is indeed with great regret that circumstances beyond our control have compelled us to sever peaceful negotiations with our neighbouring Power. We are, however, pleased to say that our relations of friendship are daily increasing in cordiality with those Powers which are so worthily represented here, and we desire most earnestly to draw those relations still closer. We propose the health and happiness of the sovereigns and rulers of those Powers."

On February 10, 1904, the following prayerful declaration of war from the Tsar of Russia, the Apostle of Peace, was published in the *Official Messenger*, at St. Petersburg:—

"We proclaim to all our faithful subjects that in our solicitude for the preservation of that peace so dear to our heart, we have put forth every effort to assure tranquillity in the Far East. To these pacific ends we declared our assent to the revision, proposed by the Japanese Government, of the agreements existing between the two Empires concerning Korean affairs. The negotiations initiated on this subject were, however, not brought to a conclusion, and Japan, not even awaiting the arrival of our last reply and the proposals of our Government, informed us of the rupture of the negotiations and of diplomatic relations with Russia.

"Without previously notifying that the rupture of such relations implied the beginning of warlike action, the Japanese Government ordered its torpedo boats to make a sudden attack on our squadron in the outer roadstead of the fortress of Port Arthur. After receiving the report of our Viceroy on the subject,

we at once commanded Japan's challenge to be replied to by arms.

"While proclaiming this our resolve, we, in unshakable confidence in the help of the Almighty, and firmly trusting in the unanimous readiness of all our faithful subjects to defend the Fatherland together with ourselves, invoke God's blessing on our glorious forces of the army and navy."

What an instructive revelation of Russian methods is contained in that proclamation—a peaceful Tsar, forced into war against his will, confidently appealing to the Creator, as to a fellow-sovereign, to lead the "glorious forces" of Russia on to victory!

On the day preceding the issue of the Tsar's confident appeal to heaven and to arms, he had sent an appeal of another character to the Powers, justifying his conduct.[1] It began by asserting that the reason Russia refused to hold conferences at St. Petersburg to consider the Japanese proposals of August 12, 1903, was "in consequence of the establishment at that time of a Viceroyalty in the Far East."

But the Japanese note was presented at St. Petersburg on the 12th of August, and the proclamation of Alexieff did not take place until the 13th of August. We are rather inclined to believe that Alexieff's appointment was the consequence of the presentation of the Japanese proposals, and to discredit the assertion that the refusal to hold conferences at St. Petersburg was in consequence of the creation of Alexieff's Viceroyalty.

The Tsar wanted Japan to deal with the Viceroy of the Far East, as if Alexieff were an independent monarch, and as if Japan were a petty principality unworthy of being dealt with directly by the Tsar and

[1] *Official Communiqué*, published at St. Petersburg, February 9, 1904.

his Government. "Admiral Alexieff was charged by imperial command," says the Russian official statement, "to draw up a project for a new understanding with Japan, with the co-operation of the Russian minister at Tokio, who was entrusted with the negotiations with the Japanese Government." Alexieff was, in the opinion of the Tsar, a sovereign of the same rank as the Mikado; and the new Viceroy's position, it was hoped, would be firmly established by prolonged negotiations conducted on a footing of equality with the Emperor of Japan.

The Russian statement makes only a passing reference to Manchuria: "The Imperial Government, however, does not refuse, so long as the occupation of Manchuria lasts, to recognise both the sovereignty of the Bogdo Khan in Manchuria and the privileges acquired there by the Powers through treaties with China." The Emperor of China is called by his Tartar title as if he too were a feudatory sovereign to Nicholas, the principal Tartar at St. Petersburg, the God on Earth.[1] China's rights in Manchuria were, by this paragraph, placed upon a level with the rights of the foreign Treaty Powers in that kingdom.

In a word, this official statement, put forward by Russia to justify itself in the eyes of Europe, is in reality a self-condemnation. It casts to the winds even the pretence of evacuating Manchuria, despite the countless solemn promises to do so which were recorded at that moment in every Foreign Office in Europe, Asia, and America.

On February 11th, the day following the Tsar's declaration of war, our ambassador at St. Petersburg, telegraphed that "a rumour was current in St. Petersburg, causing great exasperation, that Wei-hai-wei, with Great Britain's connivance, had been used for a

[1] One of the religious titles of the Tsar.



The complete destruction of the Russian fleet having been reported by Admiral Togo the great sailor was summoned home to Tokio to take measures for handling the Baltic fleet, if and when it should appear in Eastern waters. p. 320

Face p. [illegible]

base" for the Japanese attack on Port Arthur. Our people at Wei-hai-wei did not even know that the fight had taken place until they heard of the Japanese victory accidentally from a passing steamer. Our ambassador was at once instructed to make a full explanation and give ample assurance of our neutrality to the Russian Emperor.

It is in such delicate exchanges of courtesy that our diplomatists may still do their country service. Groundless charges by Russia, followed by protestations of innocence from us, while Russia continued to act in a manner utterly regardless of British interests—such seems to be the epitome of our negotiations with the Tsar in the Far East for the past ten years.

Seoul, the Korean capital, was now in the hands of the Japanese, and the Russian minister was ordered to take himself off from the scene of his prolonged diplomatic labours. On February 14th the Japanese seized the Port of Masampho and effectually put an end to all Russia's hopes of occupying that important place as a naval station. They also occupied Ching-hai-wen, a Russian coaling station in the immediate vicinity.

Admiral Togo's final report of the bombardment of Port Arthur was brief and modest: "After the combined fleet left Sasebo on the 6th, everything went off as planned," said the victorious admiral. "At midnight on the 8th the advance squadron attacked the enemy's advance squadron, the latter being mostly outside the bay. The *Poltava*, *Askold*, and two others were apparently struck by torpedoes. At noon on the 9th the fleet advanced to the offing of Port Arthur Bay and attacked the enemy for forty minutes, I believe, doing considerable damage. I believe the enemy were exceedingly demoralised. They stopped fighting at one o'clock and appeared to retreat to the harbour. The Japanese fleet suffered but very slight damage, and

its fighting strength has not decreased. Our casualties were four killed and fifty-four wounded. The Imperial Princes on board suffered no harm. The conduct of the officers was cool and not unlike their conduct at manœuvres. This morning, owing to the heavy south wind, detailed reports from the vessels have not been received, so I merely report the above facts."

Sasebo, the Japanese naval base, is near Nagasaki at the western extremity of Japan, 540 miles from Port Arthur. The Viceroy of the Far East, sovereign and compeer of the Mikado, showed no inclination to entrust his august person afloat. Instead of being in the forefront of the battle, like Admiral Togo, he remained ashore, apparently on his beam ends, inditing dismal telegrams to the Tsar.

The *Tsarevitch* and *Pallada* were towed into the inner harbour. The leak in the *Retvisan* was being "temporarily stopped." "The repairing of the ironclads," says Alexieff, "is a complicated business, the period for the completion of which it is hard to indicate. The *Pallada* and the *Novik* will be brought into harbour, and docked in succession."

Alexieff's reign in the Far East had not lasted long.

Panic was already beginning to display itself amongst the Russians at Port Arthur. They were sending off their women and children by the German cruiser *Hansa*; but Alexieff complained to the Tsar that the ship had been fired on by the watchful Japanese.

Meantime in Manchuria the Russians were behaving themselves with Tartar ferocity. Atrocities were being committed daily at Niuchwang, the treaty port which was to have been restored to the world's trade on the 8th of October, 1903.[1]

Bodies of Russian police and soldiers were sacking the hotels in that city, assaulting Japanese who

[1] Reuter's correspondent, *The Times*, February 17th.

happened to be staying there, robbing them of food, money, and jewellery. The Civil Administrator of Niuchwang announced that Viceroy Alexieff "would not recognise foreign consular authority in matters relating to Port Arthur and Manchuria." The Russians were commandeering everything.

At Peking the news of the Russian defeat was received with jubilation by the populace. The Japanese agents distributed bulletins in the streets, "which were eagerly read by thousands."[1] In Russia the millions of the Tsar's down-trodden serfs were moaning uneasily in that sleep of living death in which they and their fathers have been immersed for centuries. At Baku, one of the commercial centres in Transcaucasia, "the Armenian clergy celebrated a solemn *Te Deum* service for the success of the Russian arms. At the end of the *Te Deum*, during the singing of the National Anthem, a bomb was thrown at the clergy. The bomb exploded, wounding several persons, two of whom succumbed to their injuries. When the excitement which the deed occasioned had been allayed, the congregation proceeded, carrying a portrait of the Tsar, to the House of the Governor. They requested his Excellency to convey to the Tsar their feelings of loyalty, and to accept the sum of £100 for the relief of those who had been injured in the bomb outrage"!

Orthodox Greek priests were offering up sacrifices all over Europe for the success of Russia. The priests of the Czechs, Croatians, Slovenes, and other branches of the Slavonic race in Austria-Hungary, were praying for the victory of Holy Russia and the Imperial God on Earth. At Athens a litany was sung in the cathedral for the triumph of the Tsar. At Belgrade, that city of intrigue and assassination, the Metropolitan Innocentius officiated at a service of supplication for

[1] *The Times'* correspondent, February 10th.

the success of Russian arms, held in the cathedral. King Peter, the occupant of the blood-stained throne, was unable to be present "owing to a slight indisposition." In Bulgaria, Prince Ferdinand attended a service to invoke the blessing of Heaven on the Russian arms in the war against Japan.

There does not appear to have been a priest of any denomination in Europe or America willing to offer up a prayer for the success of Japan.

The Japanese commenced to land an army corps of three divisions at Chemulpo on February 19th, and the powerful Russian Pacific Fleet was so disorganised by Togo's recent attack that it offered no resistance. Russian troops, however, were crossing the Yalu and establishing themselves on Korean territory at Wichu and other places. Japanese troops were marching from Chemulpo to Seoul as fast as they were landed.

Alexieff betook himself into the interior of the country, lest by any chance his rash valour should tempt him on board a Russian battleship to lead the fight against Admiral Togo. He left Port Arthur for Mukden, and established his headquarters there "in small houses prepared in advance." But it was added: "He may possibly take up his quarters in his own special train." Such behaviour was but an earnest of the conduct of the highly-placed Russians all through the impending war. From his place of safety in Mukden the Viceroy of the Far East issued the following proclamation to the people of Manchuria, which, if we did not know that its composer was the secondary cause of unmeasurable suffering to mankind, would read like an extract from a melodrama. The document was dated February 23rd, and its preamble was as follows:—

"War having commenced between Russia and Japan, I, imperially appointed by the great Russian Govern-

ment as the High Official in Charge of the Far East, have determined upon six regulations, which all must tremblingly obey." [1]

Note the kingly tone assumed by Alexieff, proving the truth of our interpretation of the Tsar's object in promoting him. If there was one man in the Far East who was in a more trembling mood than another at that particular moment it appears to us that Alexieff was he, whether in his own special train ready to fly into the depths of Siberia, or in his headquarters at Mukden, safe from the guns of Admiral Togo.

The first Alexieff regulation was as follows: "First, just when peaceful negotiations were proceeding between Russia and Japan, the Japanese, harbouring unexpected thoughts, made a treacherous, covert attack on our fleet. Forced by circumstances of so great difficulty, it is incumbent upon us to offer a desperate resistance to protect Chinese territory from invasion, and to prevent the Japanese from passing over it to devastate the Russian boundary."

Nothing could well be more contemptible than the frame of mind displayed by this Russian Viceroy. He had not expected an attack from the Japanese fleet. He had been relying on his proclamations and his reviews of troops to terrorise the Mikado, and war was, for him, "an unexpected thought." He pretends that his anxiety is not for himself or for the Russian occupation of Manchuria, but for China; and that the consideration uppermost in his mind is "to offer a desperate resistance to protect Chinese territory from invasion"!

Alexieff's second regulation was: "On this occasion the interests of Russia and China are indissolubly allied, and, on the principle of mutual connection between the cart prop and the cart, the duty of China

[1] *The Times*, February 25, 1904.

should be to join in attacking and destroying the invader wherever he is encountered. But China has announced to me her resolve to remain neutral, and to look on with her hands in her sleeves. Accordingly, I command every official in Manchuria not only not to hinder our troops, whether on the march or in garrison, from purchasing whatever provisions are necessary, but also to render them every possible assistance."

He had given an invitation to China to declare war upon Japan, and China had not been willing to obey him; but, on the contrary, proclaimed her neutrality on February 12th in an Imperial edict, which also contained the announcement that Tszu-Hszi and Kwang-Su had no intention of leaving Peking. They were much safer in Peking than at Singanfu, or any of the towns near the Mongolian border, where Russia might have laid hands on them, and used them for trade purposes, as she once did to the Emperor of Korea.

But despite China's refusal to fight for Alexieff, the Viceroy of the Far East proceeds to give his commands to every official in Manchuria, after the manner of an absolute monarch :—

"Third, all the inhabitants in Manchuria—gentry, agriculturists, workmen, and merchants—must continue their vocations as usual. When the Russian troops enter your neighbourhood you must treat them with confidence, and in return the Russian troops will not ill-treat you but accord you extra protection."

Everything is to be commandeered, and all the resources of Manchuria are to be placed at the disposal of the Russian army. The merchants stand low in King Alexieff's esteem. He does not like these pushing American, English, and Japanese traders who want rights in the treaty port of Niuchwang and other places, so he decrees that they shall be last on his roll of precedence.

If there is one thing more distasteful than another about all the Russian official documents, it is the hypocritical appeals to God with which they are redolent. When some particularly nefarious policy is about to be embarked upon, it is always claimed for it that God has given it His special blessing. Alexieff now decrees that it is a virtue to assist him: "Fourth," he exclaims, "I hold all virtuous citizens residing in the neighbourhood of Manchurian railways or telegraph or telephone wires responsible for their protection. The official headmen and village elders must unanimously devise means to prevent damage. For this I shall be grateful." The gratitude of a king! "Should attempts at destruction be made, not only will the defenders be severely punished, but you, the officials and people of the vicinity who witness such attempts, will be held responsible." The vengeance of a sovereign! Then Alexieff becomes dogmatic and minatory: "Fifth, the Chunchuses, the red-bearded brigands, are the curse of Manchuria. The Russian army desires to exterminate them. Be not afraid of their vengeance, but learn in which thicket these desperadoes are assembling, and give information that they may be utterly destroyed. Any one privily harbouring the desperadoes or concealing their hiding-places will be punished as if he were himself a desperado." If Alexieff were to invite the opinion of the world on the question he would find, perhaps, that most people regarded himself, rather than the red-bearded brigands, as "the curse of Manchuria."

Alexieff's last regulation is a warm appeal for confidence. The main thing wanted is faith, implicit faith in Viceroy Alexieff and the Russians: "Sixth, I earnestly trust that the people will extend unanimous confidence to the Russian army. If officials or people treat with enmity the Russian army, the Russian

Government will assuredly exterminate these persons, showing no mercy. When the time comes, the Russian Government will also devise a suitable policy to protect its interests."

An Imperial ukase was issued relieving General Kuropatkin of his office as Minister of War, and appointing him to the supreme command of the Russian troops in Manchuria. General Linievitch, the superseded commander of the Manchurian army, refused to accept a post under the new Commander-in-Chief, and went to Vladivostock to take command of the garrison there.

"It is the Emperor's will," he said, "and I submit; but the future will show who is the more fit for the place."[1]

Kuropatkin is described as being, "like most Russian generals, a court favourite, polite and wily, clever, cool, and, by his experience of power, a good judge of men"—Linievitch was not such a favourite.

By the same decree Admiral Makaroff was appointed to the command of the Pacific Fleet; and Alexieff's position became more monarchical than ever, for he had now commanders-in-chief by land and sea under his orders, leaving him free to discharge those purely regal duties for which he thought himself so well qualified.

General Kuropatkin's aide-de-camp informed the St. Petersburg correspondent of a leading Paris newspaper[2] that the new Commander-in-Chief had made the following statement: "I do not intend to sacrifice needlessly a single man. We shall operate in great masses. To give the Japanese a lesson we shall make a little promenade in their island after having crushed

[1] An Italian correspondent with Kuropatkin, *The Times*, November, 1904.

[2] *Echo de Paris.*

them in Korea and Manchuria. If I have anything to say in the matter, we shall sign the treaty of peace at Tokio, and nowhere else. I do not know whether serious action will begin before the month of July, but I hope to have finished before the end of the year, and to make way for the plenipotentiaries called upon to draw up the conditions of peace. We will never allow Great Britain to intervene and to prevent us from profiting by our hard-earned victory. Korea will be Russian."

The same correspondent also had an interview with M. Witte, who had then recently retired from the office of Minister of Finance. Questioned on the war, M. Witte said: "All I can say is that, thanks to Kuropatkin and Makaroff, we shall eventually beat the Japanese. Kuropatkin is a strategist, the like of whom does not exist in Europe. He will crush the enemy by the overwhelming forces he will be able to put into the field."

On February 22nd, Russia issued an appeal to the Powers, charging Japan with a violation of international law because, before the formal declaration of war, she had annihilated the Russian warships at Chemulpo, bombarded Port Arthur, and landed her troops at Seoul. The peevish tone of the document was noticeable. It accused Japan of having "maliciously stopped the delivery of Russian telegrams." It described the marine fight at Chemulpo as "a dastardly attack." It complained that the Japanese ordered the withdrawal of the Russian Legation and consulate from Korea. None of the Powers, however, felt competent to take action upon the Russian protest.

Japan replied promptly to Russia's complaint: "In recent wars it had been a common practice to declare war subsequent to the opening of hostilities," and "it

was the unanimous opinon of international jurists that a declaration of war is not an indispensable prerequisite to the declaration of hostilities." Japan furthermore pointed out that in 1808 Russia had invaded Finland even before the rupture of their diplomatic relations.

On February 24th the Japanese made an heroic attempt to seal Port Arthur by blocking the entrance to the harbour. Admiral Togo's official description of the attempt forms a striking contrast to the examples of Russian braggadocio we have quoted: "The five steamers chartered for the purpose of blocking the entrance of Port Arthur left for their destination on the morning of the 24th. The *Tenshin Maru* led the way. She steered too much to the left. When she got to a point three miles south-west of the entrance, it appears that she was struck by the enemy's shell and ran ashore. The other steamers changed their course to the north-east. The enemy's searchlight caused great difficulty to their movement. The violent fire of the enemy first struck the steering-gear on the *Bushu Maru*, which became unable to move. She grounded close to the *Tenshin Maru*, blew up, and sank. The *Buyo Maru* was seriously damaged by the enemy's fire. She could not reach the entrance and sank. The *Hokoku Maru* and *Jense Maru* rushed towards the harbour entrance; and when the former got close to the *Retvisan*, having the latter at her eastern side, the explosive was lit. With a loud cheer the officers and crews left the sinking vessel and got into the boats. Owing to the constant use of the searchlight and the violent fire of the enemy, they were compelled to take a roundabout course and could not reach our torpedo boats. At daybreak the wind grew stronger and the sea rougher. After indescribable hardship

these officers and men at last succeeded in rejoining the main fleet at about three o'clock in the afternoon."

Vice-Admiral Kamimura says that the officers and crews of the sunken steamers were all taken up by the Japanese destroyers, and that the destroyers and torpedo boats were all unharmed.

The steamers which were employed for this venturous undertaking were old ships, condemned as unseaworthy. They were laden with stones and charged with explosives. They were manned by crews whose duty it was to navigate them straight into the harbour entrance, under the full fire of the fortress, and if they were so lucky as to reach the required position, each crew was bound to ignite the explosives on board and escape as well as they could from the sinking ship. It was a most perilous task for men to engage in; but when Admiral Togo had called for volunteers, over two thousand men offered themselves for the work.

Alexieff jubilantly informed the Tsar that the attempt to seal Port Arthur had not succeeded. The entrance channel was still navigable, and three cruisers had gone in pursuit of the enemy's fleet, but had been mercifully recalled! There was great rejoicing in St. Petersburg on the night of February 24th, especially in the palace and amongst the Cabinet ministers; lakes of champagne were consumed in celebrating the "defeat of the Japanese fleet at Port Arthur," and "the *Te Deum* was sung at the Winter Palace."

General Stoessel, commander of the troops at Port Arthur, now thought the occasion opportune, and issued a bombastic proclamation to his garrison on February 27th. Viewed in the light of his subsequent surrender, it forms a striking testimony to the un-

trustworthiness of Russian professions. He said that "the Japanese considered the seizure of Port Arthur to be a question of national honour," and "intended to land on the peninsula and attempt to seize the fortress and draw off." But those who thought that Port Arthur could by any possibility be ever captured had reckoned without their Stoessel: "The enemy is mistaken. Our troops know, and the inhabitants are herewith notified by me, that we shall not give way. We must fight to the finish, as I, the Commander, will never give the order to surrender. I bring this to the notice of those less courageous, and call upon all to become convinced of the necessity of fighting to the death. Those who leave without fighting will not save themselves. There is no way out. On three sides is the sea, and on the fourth side will be the enemy. There is no other means but fighting."

This document was not only inconsiderate but untrue. It forced the non-fighting population to remain within the fortress on the assurance that the Japanese had already cut off Port Arthur on the land side, when in reality there were no Japanese soldiers nearer than Korea, where at that date not more than 20,000 Japanese troops had been landed.

On the day of Stoessel's proclamation the Japanese Legation published the text of a protocol which had just been concluded between Japan and Korea, in which (1) Korea undertook "to place full confidence in Japan, and adopt the advice of the latter in regard to improvement in administration"; (2) Japan undertook to ensure "the safety and rights of the Imperial household at Korea"; (3) Japan guaranteed the independence and territorial integrity of Korea; (4) Japan undertook to take strategic measures for the protection of Korea, and Korea undertook to give Japan a free hand in doing so; (5) both Governments

undertook to conclude no treaty with another Power except by mutual consent.

Alexieff was still far away from the scene of threatened conflict on land and sea. His train was kept continually under steam at Mukden; and on February 28th he telegraphed to the Tsar as follows: "All is tranquil in Southern Manchuria, and troop trains are arriving several times daily. The Chinese population is quiet, and Russians have no difficulty in purchasing provisions and horses." It was reported at the same time, on the most reliable authority, that Russians were ill-treating and murdering Japanese refugees on their way through Manchuria, and "that the Russian soldiery at Niuchwang were totally undisciplined, making the place unfit for European ladies."

The trustworthy correspondent of *The Times*, wiring on the same date as Alexieff's despatch to the Tsar, says that one hundred Japanese women, "mostly wives and daughters of respectable men," who had just arrived at Nagasaki, reported that "during their detention at Port Arthur they were nearly all outraged by the Russian soldiers, who stole their entire belongings."

That was the last information heard of the Russians at the end of February. How different were the accounts given of the behaviour of the Japanese at Chemulpo and Seoul at the same time! "In spite of the difficulties to contend with," writes one observant witness,[1] "the transport department of the Japanese army has landed in one week 100,000 tons of supplies, 2,500 cavalry horses, and some 20,000 men. This has been accomplished without noise, confusion, accident, or congestion in the streets leading to the landing jetty, with far less noise and confusion than attends

[1] *New York Herald*, Chemulpo correspondent.

the discharging of the cargo of an 800-ton coasting steamer. The appearance of the sturdy, silent, and well-equipped Japanese soldier excites as much admiration as does the wonderful thoroughness and system of the department charged with his transport and housing. Not a single case of drunkenness or disorder is apparent. The impression given by a sight of the Japanese army in the field is one of sturdy readiness, endurance, and silence."

Russia and Japan were now preparing to fight their battles in Korean and Chinese territories, just as Marlborough fought the marshals of Louis XIV. in the Netherlands, and as Wellington fought the generals of Napoleon in Spain and Portugal.

CHAPTER XIII

Russian Volunteer Fleet—The Tsar and the Press—Kuroki's advance in Korea—*Petropavlovsk* sunk—Death of Makaroff—Japanese victory at the Yalu—Russian retreat—Second Japanese Army lands at Liao-Tong—Port Arthur cut off—Third Japanese Army lands at Takushan.

ON March 1st the world was informed that "the first military train of twenty-five coaches" had been safely shipped across Lake Baikal, "after a religious service."[1] Chaos at that time seems to have reigned supreme on the Trans-Siberian Railway. Crowds of Russians, male and female, were endeavouring to escape from Manchuria. "They are even travelling fourth class because of insufficient accommodation in other classes."[2]

The Russians now audaciously stationed their "volunteer fleet" in the Red Sea, and proceeded to stop, search, and capture English and other vessels eastward bound. A great number of British vessels, including some of the P. & O. steamers, were stopped in the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf, and the regular course of trade between Great Britain and India was seriously interfered with. But we shall defer our account of the achievements of this squadron

[1] *The Times'* Moscow correspondent.

[2] Reuter's correspondent.

to a subsequent chapter in which we shall deal with the exploits of the Baltic Fleet.

Alexieff sent a telegram to the Tsar on March 6th, to "most humbly inform his Majesty" that Japanese ships had opened fire on Vladivostock at a range of five miles, but had done no damage to the fortress. The Russians did not reply, and the Japanese ships, which "were covered with ice," steamed away. "The attack," says Alexieff, displaying his mathematical ability, "which resulted in no loss to us, cost the enemy over £20,000." In acknowledgment of this victory over Japan, the Tsar commanded Alexieff to communicate to the garrison "his Majesty's gracious congratulations on the occasion of their first battle and baptism of fire, and his conviction that all will *make a rampart of their bodies* to protect Russia's stronghold against the attacks of the enemy." We are told that "the Imperial message caused great rejoicing amongst the garrison and population of Vladivostock, generally."

On March 7th, General Sakharoff, whose name will appear frequently in these pages, arrived at Harbin and assumed command of the First Army Corps.

At midnight on March 9th two divisions of Japanese destroyers approached Port Arthur under a desultory fire from the forts. An engagement ensued in which the Japanese gained the advantage and captured a Russian destroyer. Two Russian warships emerged from the harbour, but withdrew on seeing the approach of some Japanese cruisers detached by Admiral Togo to assist the destroyers. Admiral Makaroff sent a telegram in which he claimed the engagement as an unqualified victory; and Alexieff, from the security of his retreat at Mukden, dilated on the "exemplary courage" of the soldiers in Port Arthur during the Japanese bombardment. On the same day a detach-

ment of Japanese cruisers shelled Dalny, and demolished some of the buildings on the Liao-ti-shan promontory near Port Arthur. The Grand Duke Boris "and his suite" left St. Petersburg for the seat of war on March 10th; but he will not be found distinguishing himself at the front as the narrative proceeds.

The inspired Russian newspapers were now full of wild and boastful threats. One journal said that in order to prevent the interference of England, the Russian troops in Central Asia should be ready to advance into India; and that, with a view to preventing the interference of the United States, a Russian Army Corps should be ready to cross the ice at Behring Straits and "make a demonstration in Russia's ancient American possessions," an operation which, it was seriously added, would be "more useful to Russia than to the Americans to invade the deserts of Okhotsk and Yakutsk"! The same journal concluded by asserting that "in the Far East there must be but one master, namely, Russia."

A rumour was industriously circulated that the Tsar intended to proceeded to the front in August—a date five months distant. But it was anticipated that Kuropatkin would then have reached Tokio.

On March 10th a deputation "representing the daily Press of Russia" waited upon the Tsar to express their devotion to his Majesty. It consisted of two individuals, the publisher of the *Novoe Vremya* and the editor of the *Viedomosti*. The incident was intended to convince the outside world that freedom of the Press existed in Russia. Nicholas spoke at greater length to the two newspaper men than he had done to the diplomatists on January 14th.

"I have been following the Press with attention lately," he said, "and have become convinced that it

interprets events rightly." He had been following the Press in a very literal and unpleasant sense of the word by imprisoning editors and suppressing newspapers throughout his dominions. His judgment on the proper method of conducting a newspaper, therefore, possessed a peculiar importance for the deputation.

"The national spirit which animates the Press has given me profound satisfaction," the Tsar added. "I hope the Press will continue to show itself worthy of its task, to express the feelings and thoughts of the country, and to use its great influence upon public opinion in order to impart to it the truth, and nothing but the truth."

None of the Russian professions quoted in this history perhaps can claim the distinction of being more at variance with the truth than this utterance. The Press is not allowed to express "the feelings and thoughts" of the people in Russia, but only what the Tsar wishes and what the Grand Dukes and official classes feel and think. As there is a Board of Censors at Peking, so there is a Chief Department for Press Affairs at St. Petersburg; and a day or two before the outbreak of war the Head of that Department issued the following notice to all the Russian newspapers: "His Majesty the Emperor has been graciously pleased to command that all articles and news relating to the activity of our army and fleet and destined to appear in periodical publications *should be previously submitted to the judgment of competent military persons.* In order to provide for the proper execution of his Majesty's command, rules have been drawn up, a copy of which is attached to the present document, and to these rules the Chief Department for Press Affairs hereby draws the attention of the proprietors of the periodical publications mentioned below."

Under those circumstances we are at liberty to infer

that the suggestions for the invasion of India and Alaska, and the report that the Tsar meant to take the field, had won the approval of the "competent military persons" appointed for the censorship of the Press.

The Japanese Diet met on Sunday, March 19th, and passed a resolution approving of the war, and a vote of thanks to the navy. Admiral Togo attacked Port Arthur again on March 22nd. The Japanese outposts were slowly but surely advancing northward in Korea. They were now at Ping-Yang, midway between Seoul and Wichu, and the Russian tentacles were being drawn in before them, despite the fact that Kuropatkin announced on March 18th that "there were 230,000 Russians concentrated between Harbin and Port Arthur." General Mistchenko at the front wired to Alexieff at Mukden that "the Japanese horses were poor." The educated Russians are, perhaps, better judges of horses than of men; but nevertheless we shall not find the Japanese suffering any losses owing to the unfitness of their cavalry.

The Japanese issued stringent regulations in reference to war correspondents; and the Russians, on their side, established a most rigorous press censorship; but the British newspapers, notwithstanding, have given the world a useful and intelligible account of the military and naval operations from the beginning of the war.

On March 27th Admiral Makaroff "begged most humbly to report" to the Tsar that Admiral Togo had made a second attempt "to block the entrance to the inner roadstead" at Port Arthur by sinking four merchant ships; but the attempt failed, he adds, "owing to our heavy artillery fire and the boldness of our torpedo boats." The Japanese succeeded in sinking the vessels, but not in the fairway of navigation. The Russian fleet showed itself in the roads,

but the Japanese ships retired. Alexieff sent the Tsar a duplicate version of this intelligence from Harbin.

Meanwhile the Japanese troops were moving northward. On March 23rd General Mistchenko reported to Alexieff that the enemy had occupied An-ju, a town midway between Ping-Yang and Wichu; and Kuropatkin telegraphed to the Tsar on March 29th giving details of several outpost engagements near Chang-ju, a station between An-ju and Wichu, as the result of which the entire Russian force engaged were compelled to retire, "the retirement being carried out with the deliberation of parade."

At the opening of April the Russians had placed no military success to their credit, and on the 4th of the month the Japanese scouts entered the important town of Wichu on the Yalu River. The Russians deserted their settlement at Yongampho and were hurriedly evacuating their last positions in Korea and retiring behind the Yalu into Manchuria. The first Japanese army, under General Kuroki, estimated at 45,000 men, was now concentrated at An-ju and prepared to advance immediately upon Wichu. Kuropatkin was not yet at the front, but had reached Niuchwang, where he held a review of Russian troops and established martial law in the treaty port. It was announced that "by the end of May, General Kuropatkin would have half a million troops at his disposal."

On April 13th the Russian fleet at Port Arthur emerged from the roadstead and put out to sea, in search of the Japanese squadron, which had been attacking the fortress since the 11th. Admiral Makaroff was in command and flew his flag on the battleship *Petropavlovsk*—built in 1894, with a displacement of 10,960 tons, and a speed of 17·5 knots—on board which was also the Grand Duke Cyril, who had been so cordially received by the Empress Tszu-Hszi in



1901. Cyril's brother, the Grand Duke Boris, "and his suite" remained ashore, and was observing the deploying of the squadron "through a naval telescope." It was expected that the day would be one of triumph for Holy Russia.

Some Japanese ships were in sight, but they steamed off in awe of the Russians, as it must have seemed to Boris and Stoessel as they stood, glasses in hand, on the ramparts of Port Arthur. Suddenly Japanese reinforcements began to show themselves on the horizon, whereupon the Russian squadron put about and steamed at full pressure for the roadstead. On the way home the *Petropavlovsk* struck a submarine mine, one of many laid down on the preceding day by the Japanese, and capsized. Admiral Makaroff, forty officers, and 750 seamen perished; but the Grand Duke Cyril, six officers, and thirty-two sailors were rescued. The *Pobieda* was also struck by a mine, "but was able to regain the port."

A telegram was sent to the Tsar informing him that Cyril had been "saved by a miracle," and that "a thanksgiving service had already been celebrated" for his safety. They had a most efficient staff of priests and monks with the Russian forces, and if the officers and men only knew how to fight as well as the priests knew how to celebrate thanksgiving services it would have fared badly with the Japanese!

Kuropatkin, the courtier, whom we would have expected to find facing the Japanese at the Yalu River, was at Port Arthur, busying himself about the Grand Duke Cyril. He telegraphed to the Grand Duke Vladimir, saying: "I have just presented myself to the Grand Duke Cyril, who was preserved by the providence of God, and have had a long conversation with his Imperial Highness. Your son is speedily recovering from the effects of the shock he has

sustained. The few traces which he bears of burns will disappear in the course of a week. The Grand Duke is cheerful, and although he sustained injuries to his feet, he received me standing and is able to walk without assistance. In a few days the Grand Duke will have recovered from these injuries as well."

It was thus that Kuropatkin, the unrivalled strategist, was employing himself on April 14th, 150 miles away from the fighting on the Yalu!

The Times' special steamer, the *Haimun*, witnessed the engagement in which the *Petropavlovsk* was sunk; and, by means of De Forest's wireless telegraphy, gave the public a useful description of what was one of the most important naval manœuvres of modern times. If Makaroff had been enticed further out to sea, Togo would have forced a general engagement which would have given the Russian admiral an opportunity of proving his capacity. The Russians were much irritated by the daring operations of the *Haimun*, and shortly afterwards the Tsar issued a decree threatening to seize the little ship, destroy her telegraphic apparatus, as being an implement of war, and deal with *The Times'* correspondent as a spy!

Admiral Togo's account of the engagement in which the *Petropavlovsk* was sunk is in his usual clear and modest style: "On the 11th our combined fleet commenced, as previously planned, the eighth attack on Port Arthur. The fourth and fifth destroyer flotillas, the fourteenth torpedo flotilla, and the *Koryo Maru* reached the mouth of Port Arthur at midnight on the 12th, and effected the laying of mines at several points outside the port, defying the enemy's searchlight.

"The second destroyer flotilla discovered, at dawn of the 13th, one Russian destroyer trying to enter the harbour, and, after ten minutes' attack, sank her. Another Russian destroyer was discovered coming

from Liao-ti-shan. We attacked her, but she managed to flee into the harbour. There were no casualties on our side except two seamen slightly wounded. There was no time to rescue the enemy's drowning crew, as the *Bayan*"—a Russian cruiser—"approached."

"The third fleet reached outside of Port Arthur at 8 a.m., when the *Bayan* came out and opened fire. Immediately the *Novik*, *Askold*, *Diana*, *Petropavlovsk*, *Pobieda*, and *Poltava* came out and made offensive attack upon us.

"Our third fleet tardily answering and gradually retiring, enticed the enemy fifteen miles south-east of the port, when our first fleet, being informed through wireless telegraphy from our third fleet, suddenly appeared before the enemy and attacked them.

"While the enemy was trying to regain the port, a battleship of the *Petropavlovsk* type struck mines laid down by us on the previous evening, and sank at 10.32 a.m.

"Another ship was observed to have lost freedom of movement, but the confusion of the enemy's ships prevented us from identifying her. They finally managed to regain the port."

We have here a fine example of Admiral Togo's truthfulness. He did not know when he sent this account to Tokio that it was the *Petropavlovsk* herself that had sunk; and he concluded his despatch as follows:—

"Our third fleet suffered no damage.

"The enemy's damage was, besides the above-mentioned, probably slight also.

"Our first fleet did not reach firing distance.

"Our fleets retired at 1 p.m., prepared for another attack."

Next day the Japanese fleets returned to Port Arthur, but found no Russian ships outside the

harbour. They discovered, however, "three mines laid by the enemy, and destroyed them all." They bombarded the new forts at Liao-ti-shan, the extreme point of the Port Arthur peninsula, for two hours, and "finally silenced" them.

On April 26th three Russian cruisers and two torpedo boats of the Vladivostock fleet met a Japanese transport steamer, the *Kinshin Maru*, 4,000 tons, laden with rice and military stores, and about 1,500 tons of coal, and having also on board the ninth company of the 37th infantry regiment. The torpedo boats stopped the transport, and summoned the captain to come aboard the *Rossia*, which he did, being accompanied by three other naval officers. They were detained by the Russians, who then called upon the transport to surrender. "The soldiers, in strict discipline, obeying their officer's orders, refused." The Russians discharged a torpedo, and the Japanese soldiers formed themselves into lines on deck, and exchanged fire with the enemy. The coolies and traders who were on board took to the boats, but the soldiers remained drawn-up on deck, awaiting death. Another torpedo was discharged, "which, striking the engine-room, split the transport in two." Five officers and seventy-three men of the company were lost with the *Kinshin Maru*. Of these heroes, the Russian official account says they "obstinately refused to surrender or to go on board a Russian cruiser. In the end they were sent to the bottom with the transport."

Scouting and outpost fighting were proceeding from day to day on the banks of the Yalu. The wide island-studded reach of river near Wichu was still occupied by the Russians. On April 26th, General Kuroki, in command of the first Japanese army, which was now concentrating at Wichu, acting in conjunction with a naval detachment from Admiral Togo's fleet, attacked

the Russians, and sent them flying to Chin-lien-Cheng, in Manchuria, the first important settlement on the road to Liao-Yang and Mukden. "On April 29th," says General Kuroki's official telegram, "the Japanese Twelfth Division commenced bridging the Yalu at Sukachin, and completed the operation early in the morning of the 30th; and the army crossed at 10.40 a.m. and at 1.20 p.m., severe firing on all sides, but the enemy soon silenced. Our losses, five officers slightly wounded, two men killed, and twenty-two wounded. At 8 p.m. the same day the bridge over the main stream was completed, and the army crossed and advanced upon Hushan. Same day detachment of the Hosoya squadron advanced below An-tung and fought at close range with four hundred of the enemy's infantry and cavalry. Artillery also fired upon us when leaving, but after an hour the enemy retreated. No casualties on our side."

Thus by the end of April the Russians had been driven out of Korea, the Japanese army had crossed the Yalu, and were carrying on offensive operations on Manchurian soil.

At daybreak on May 1st General Kuroki "commenced cannonading, silenced the enemy's artillery, and took possession of the heights" north-west of Chin-lien-cheng. The Japanese army advanced "from three roads, driving the enemy before them." A general engagement—the first of the war—now ensued. "During the afternoon," says General Kuroki, "the enemy offered a stubborn resistance to our pursuit, adding three hundred to our casualties." He says the Russians "fought bravely to the last," but that "finally two companies of their artillery, losing the majority of their men and horses, surrendered, raising the white flag." At 8 p.m. the Japanese troops captured the line from An-tung to Liu-shu-kou, the Imperial Guards

"surrounded the Russians on three sides, and after a severe fight captured twenty guns with horses and carriages, over twenty officers, and many men." The Japanese General Reserve Corps then advanced along the high-road to Liao-Yang in pursuit of the Russians who fled to Feng-wang-cheng, the next station of importance on the way to Liao-Yang and Mukden. When fighting ceased at nightfall the Japanese losses amounted to 318 killed and 783 wounded; but they had captured 29 quick-firing Russian guns, 38,417 shells, 1,021 rifles, 350,000 rounds of ammunition, 1,244 coats, waggons, 541 tents, supplies, tools, and telegraph stores, had taken 18 Russian officers and 525 men prisoners; and had driven the enemy before them in a complete rout. In this engagement the Greek priests had marched at the head of the Russian regiments with their crosses held aloft. General Sassulitch, who seems to have been in supreme command, says, in his report to Kuropatkin: "The losses of the 11th and 12th regiments were very heavy. In the 11th regiment the killed included Colonel Leming and Lieutenant-Colonels Dometti and Raicosky. The 12th regiment lost nine company commanders killed and wounded." The total losses of the 11th regiment alone in this fight are put down by General Kashtalinsky, who was in immediate command, as including "its colonel-commandant, forty officers, and about two thousand non-commissioned officers and men."

It was a crushing victory. The Russian soldiers had fought with a courage never to be repeated, for it was mainly begotten of ignorance and of misrepresentations made to them about the Japanese, who were depicted for them, by priests and officers, as a species of man-monkey who could never eventually stand against Muscovite force and strategy. Kuropatkin and Sassulitch and Kashtalinsky now considered themselves

fortunate in that they were able to report that their men "had retired in good order" on Feng-wang-cheng "under painful but glorious circumstances."

The Japanese "found 1,362 Russians dead on the field, placed 475 Russian wounded in Japanese hospitals, and had 138 unwounded prisoners."

On May 4th Alexieff reported that nine Japanese explosive steamers, or fireships, made a dash for the entrance to Port Arthur with the intention of blocking the passage by self-destruction, but eight of them were sunk by the guns from the fortress and the Russian warships before they reached their destination. On board the explosive ships were a number of Japanese cadets, who are said to have climbed into the rigging when the ships were sinking and discharged their revolvers at the Russians before plunging into the sea. The bravery displayed by the Japanese officers and seamen in thus providing crews for ships which were going on a mission of certain destruction has assuredly never been surpassed.

Alexieff says: "The crews of the sunken vessels saved themselves by means of boats, in which they put to sea. We opened a heavy fire on them with machine-guns and rifles, killing the majority. Some survivors were picked up and disarmed."

Admiral Togo, in his report on May 7th, said that the entrance to Port Arthur was "considered to be effectually blocked, at least for battleships and cruisers," by the operations of the 4th.

On May 5th General Kuroki's army advanced again, chased the Russians from Feng-wang-cheng, and occupied that place, and on the next day advanced another stage and occupied Hwangtiensin.

A second Japanese army, under command of Generals Oku and Nogi, was now landed at various points on the Liao-Tong peninsula at Kinchau, Fuchan, Pitsewo,

and elsewhere, and began to execute its plans for cutting off Port Arthur. Neither the Port Arthur nor Vladivostock fleet did anything effective to prevent these landing operations. The year was now far advanced into May, and Kuropatkin had done nothing but retreat. The vast bodies of troops of which he had been boasting seemed to have crumbled to dust in his hands. Of the two men who, according to M. Witte, were to ensure Russia's triumph on sea and land, Admiral Makaroff was dead and General Kuropatkin had done nothing to justify the reliance placed upon him.

The Japanese advanced guard in Liao-Tong damaged the railway line to Port Arthur, but Kuropatkin, in a telegram to the Tsar on May 10th, described how a Colonel Spridonoff "undertook to get through to Port Arthur a train full of ammunition which had arrived at Liao-Tong after the landing of the Japanese at Pitsewo." Kuropatkin is said to have addressed a telegram to the Tsar "protesting against the attitude of Admiral Alexieff, who wished to impose on him his own plan of operation." At the same time the heroic Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, "announced the transfer of his headquarters from Mukden to Harbin," three hundred miles farther back from the fighting-line, into the recesses of Manchuria"!

The hitherto evasive Kuropatkin now established his headquarters definitely at Liao-Yang, an important post on the railway line forty miles south of Mukden. The general staff at St. Petersburg sapiently declared that "the greater the distance General Kuropatkin places between himself and the enemy the greater will be the difficulties of the Japanese"! Flight and retreat were henceforth to be the business of the great Russian army which was to have made a triumphal entry into Tokio.

There were apparently no depths to which Russia was not prepared to descend in her sudden collapse. She implored the United States, "as a neutral Power whose kindliness towards China had been attested and who possessed China's goodwill, to use her influence with that Empire towards preserving neutrality." She was afraid of the red-bearded Chunchuses, who were hustling her troops near Liao-Yang. The Russians were flying pell-mell from the treaty port of Niuchwang, where they had been so bumptious. "To Liao-Yang!" was now the cry. "To Liao-Yang and Kuropatkin!" Others, in their desire for safety, were crying "To Harbin and Alexieff!" The lofty structure of their military and naval schemes had melted like an iceberg before the rising sun of Japan.

Port Arthur was now completely isolated. On May 11th one of Admiral Togo's subordinates bombarded Dalny, silenced the batteries, landed Japanese blue-jackets, and invested the city. The Russian troops meanwhile were still retreating before the Japanese under Kuroki, who was advancing swiftly but cautiously on the road to Liao-Yang, eager to meet the great Russian strategist—Kuropatkin. Major-General Pflug, in a telegram to the Russian War Office on May 15th, complained that "the advance of the enemy from Feng-wang-cheng was characterised by indecision."

On May 15th, during a dense fog, two serious accidents occurred in Admiral Togo's fleet before Port Arthur. The cruiser *Kasuga* rammed the cruiser *Yoshino* and sank her in a few minutes, and the battleship *Hatsuse*, one of the most powerful in the Japanese fleet, struck two mines successively and sank in half an hour.

Alexieff, in his retreat at Harbin, now struck upon a brilliant device. He issued a General Order in which

he proclaimed with some pride: "At my request the Emperor has granted to the exiles in Sakhalin who have expressed a desire to enrol themselves in the Volunteer Corps" certain formal privileges. "All brilliant feats of arms will be reported to me in order that I may reduce the punishment of the convict distinguishing himself, and, in exceptional cases, report to the Emperor to obtain a full pardon for the author of the achievement"!

Out of 7,080 convicts doing hard labour in the island of Sakhalin, or Saghalien, on January 1, 1898, the period at which this history begins, 2,836 were women; and out of a total of 22,167 convicts and ex-convicts in that "*glacial inferno*" 8,000 had been sent there for murder.[1] The denizens of Sakhalin constitute "a stratum of the population far below anything that exists with us—a brutish, hopeless, irreclaimable mass of human animals."[2]

Alexieff's nefarious device was to arm and let loose this colony of monsters upon Manchuria, and the Tsar approved of his plan. He had raised his hands in pious horror at the iniquities of the Chunchuses, he now raised his hands to bless the murderers of Saghalien in the crusade against the Japanese. But industry and virtue can never be borne down by idleness and vice; and it was destined that Alexieff's place should soon know him no more, and that the armament of the Saghalien colony was not fated to affect the fortunes of the war.

On May 18th Kuropatkin telegraphed to the Tsar that the Japanese were now discovered twenty miles north of Feng-wang-cheng; and the Mandarin of Kwang-tien-san, situated sixty miles north-east of Feng-wang-cheng, "informed the Tartar Field-Marshal of the

[1] C. H. Hawes, *The Uttermost East.*
[2] Henry Norman, *All the Russias.*

presence of Japanese troops in the town," and warned him that their probable object was to turn the Russian position at Liao-Yang from the north-east. The Russian commanders were beginning to quarrel amongst themselves. Kuropatkin was chafing against Alexieff's authority. General Sassulitch, who commanded at the battle of the Yalu, was superseded by General Keller.

On May 19th a large division of Japanese troops, under General Nodzu, were landed at Takushan, a point midway on the Liao-Tong coast between the mouth of the Yalu and Port Arthur, and their first achievement was the surprise and annihilation of a detachment of Cossacks.

There were now three Japanese armies on Manchurian soil. On the east was Kuroki's army advancing from the Yalu towards Liao-Yang; in the centre was Nodzu's army making due north from Takushan for the same objective; and on the west were the troops of Generals Oku and Nogi, having a double duty to perform, namely, an advance upon Liao-Yang along the Port Arthur railway line and the investment of Port Arthur itself.

CHAPTER XIV

Nogi's victory at Kinchau—Dalny taken by the Japanese—Oku's victory at Telissu—Nodzu and Kuroki join hands—Continued Russian retreat—Sortie of the Port Arthur fleet on June 23rd —Russian dissensions.

ON May 20th the Japanese army, under Generals Oku and Nogi, which, as the reader is aware, had landed at various points on the coast of the Gulf of Liao-Tong without encountering any effective opposition, commenced an attack on Kinchau, a strongly-entrenched position on the railway, and situated at the isthmus connecting the peninsula, on which Port Arthur and Dalny are situated, with the mainland. This attack, which lasted five days, may be said to have been the beginning of the actual siege of Port Arthur. The Japanese fleet co-operated with the army and shelled the Russian positions at long range. On the heights of Nanshan the Russians had erected formidable forts and defensive works, which General Oku described as being "nearly of a permanent nature," and their artillery consisted of no less than "fifty guns of various calibres, and two quick-firing field artillery companies," their infantry being ranged in lines of covered loopholed trenches, with outworks of wire entanglements and mines, while numerous machine-guns were posted at important points.

After four days' fighting, the Japanese began the

attack at 2.35 a.m. on May 26th; captured Kinchau at 5.30 a.m.; ranged all their field guns upon the Nanshan forts; and had silenced the enemy's principal artillery at 11 a.m. By that time the companies of Russian quick-firing artillery had retired to the heights of Nankuenling, nearer to Port Arthur, and kept up a continuous fire from that point until nightfall. The Japanese infantry charged the entrenched Russians again and again, advancing first to within four hundred yards, then to within two hundred yards, then to within twenty yards, the artillery meantime cannonading the Russian trenches. The fight lasted sixteen hours, the whole of the long summer's day, and twilight was approaching when the Japanese made an irresistible charge. The Russians fled, leaving the Japanese in possession of the whole height of the isthmus. The Japanese captured all the guns in the fort, seventy-eight in number, and found five hundred Russian dead upon the field. Amongst those slain on the Japanese side was General Nogi's eldest son.

The Russians minimised the Japanese victory in their official despatches, stating that, "owing to the impossibility of defending the positions to the south of Kinchau, *without the aid of the fleet*, the Russian defence at that point was only of a demonstrative character." The ships of the Port Arthur fleet were either afraid or unable to venture out to sea; or, more probable still, did not realise how their services might be made useful. The Russian fleet, as we have shown, had done nothing to embarrass the landing operations of the Japanese, why should they venture forth now when the Japanese had landed?

The news of this defeat reached St. Petersburg at an untimely moment, when the capital was holiday-making in honour of the Emperor's coronation. The sacrificial celebrations at the Tsarkoe Selo had to be cut short,

and "only a brief service was held in the chapel instead of the customary litany."

General Stoessel being now cut off from Kuropatkin, began to send reports to the Tsar. He described the fight of May 26th, not as a defence of "a demonstrative character," as Kuropatkin had done, but as "a fierce battle which lasted two days." It was by his order the positions at Kinchau and Nanshan had been evacuated. He had "inflicted enormous losses on the Japanese"; he had blown up and damaged all the guns which the Japanese had not put out of action; the retreat could not have been avoided; "it was certainly not expedient to bring up siege artillery during a fierce fight." He had laid mines and *fougasses* for the destruction of the Japanese, but their explosion "was rendered impossible, inasmuch as the Japanese turned the Russian position directly, advancing through the water up to their waists and under the protection of their ships"; but the Tsar must not be discouraged: "the spirits of our troops are excellent." Spirits, in the alcoholic sense of the word, were never wanting amongst the Russian officers in Port Arthur, if one may believe all the accounts; but one does not find the true spirit of self-forgetfulness and love of country ever prevalent amongst them.

On May 30th General Oku reported that one of his detachments had occupied Talien-wan, otherwise Dalny, the new Russian city on which such an edifice of Muscovite ambitions had been reared up, and which had been such a theme of discussion and negotiation with the diplomatists since 1898. "Over 100 warehouses," said General Oku, "besides barracks, telegraph-office, and railway station, were found uninjured. Over 290 railway cars still usable." Many of the docks and piers were also uninjured; but, true to their own character in former wars, the Russians had not fled without inflicting colossal damage. All the small

railway bridges were destroyed, the great pier was demolished, and steam launches had been sunk at the mouth of the great dock.

Despite the stringent regulations made against them, the British newspaper correspondents were bravely endeavouring to supply us with intelligible news of the progress of hostilities, not without considerable risk to themselves. Mr. Ernest Brindle, of *The Daily Mail*, and Mr. Lewis Etzel, of *The Daily Telegraph*, for instance, while sailing in a junk near the scene of action in the Gulf of Liao-Tong, were fired upon by Chinese soldiers, and Mr. Etzel was killed in the performance of his duty.

Port Arthur was now regularly invested by sea and land; its sister port, Dalny, was in the hands of the Japanese; its fleet was imprisoned; and it was cut off from communication with the Russian army. A French newspaper[1] stated, on the authority of a Russian General, that "after the recent council of war, the Tsar inquired of General Kuropatkin if the situation admitted of his advancing to the relief of Port Arthur, and Kuropatkin replied that it was impossible." Kuropatkin assuredly made no attempt, then or since, to relieve the fortress.

On the night of June 13th Admiral Togo sent a torpedo flotilla to lay mines close to Port Arthur. On the following day, at noon, he sent a second flotilla to "bombard the enemy ashore near Shaopingtso, for the purpose of facilitating a *reconnaissance*" which was being made by the Japanese army.

Mindful of the implied censure passed upon it in the official reports of the fight at Kinchau and Nanshan on the 26th of May, the Russian fleet now resolved to make a sortie. The small cruiser *Novik*, which seems to have been the bravest vessel of the fleet, was the

[1] *Echo de Paris.*

first to emerge, and was accompanied by ten destroyers. The entrance channel was evidently not navigable by the large ships, though, as we shall see, the Russians were working with success and determination to clear it. Sharp firing immediately ensued. The Japanese flotillas tried to entice the enemy by gradually retiring, but the Russians had not forgotten the day when the *Petropavlovsk* was lost, and they retired into Port Arthur at 3 p.m., satisfied that they had done something to prevent a portion of the Japanese fleet from co-operating with General Oku's army. During the night of the 13th, General Oku had advanced from Port Adams, otherwise Pu-lan-tien, and attacked Kuropatkin's outposts north of Kinchau. At noon on the 14th, just when the Russian fleet was making its sortie, the Japanese attacked a Russian position near Wafangtien, a railway station several miles north of Kinchau, in which the Russians held the ground but suffered heavily, losing a general, severely wounded, and an adjutant killed.

On the following day, June 15th, the Japanese attacked a large force of Russians, two and a half divisions strong, at Telissu, a railway station north of Wafangtien. General Oku says he surrounded the enemy, and, "after severe fighting, the Russians ran away northward at 3 p.m." The rout of the Russians was decisive. The Japanese captured several colours, 14 quick-firing guns, 300 prisoners, and buried 1,516 Russian dead on the field of battle. The Russian wounded were carried off by rail to the north.

Let us briefly consider the position of the Japanese western army, and endeavour to realise the daring and resourcefulness of the Japanese commanders. On the south of the army lay Port Arthur, with its immense garrison, well furnished with ammunition and supplies, for the investment of which a large force under General

Nogi had been specially set apart. On its north was the right wing of Kuropatkin's main Russian army, in great force, under the immediate command of General Baron Stackelberg, having railway communication with the base at Liao-Yang. Kuropatkin's army and Stoessel's were on their own ground, and the army of Oku and Nogi had penetrated between them like a wedge, now attacking Stackelberg on the north, and causing him to fall back towards Liao-Yang, anon confronting Stoessel, and compelling him to shorten his radius of defensive operations at Port Arthur.

If Kuropatkin deserved a fraction of the praise given him by the Russian experts, he would have crushed Oku at this fight of June 15th. It may be contended that he was distracted by the advance of Kuroki on the east. But it must not be forgotten that Stoessel was in Oku's rear during this engagement and might have struck a telling blow. It was a desperate battle, this fight round Telissu. "I was forced to bring up all my reserve," says Stackelberg, "but they proved insufficient, and I was compelled to retreat by three roads to the north. Our losses were heavy, but they are not yet completely known. During the engagement the third and fourth batteries of the First Artillery Brigade were literally cut to pieces by Japanese shells. Of sixteen guns, thirteen were rendered completely useless and were abandoned." On June 18th Kuropatkin gave a partial return of the Russian losses as follows: 28 officers and 648 men killed, 65 officers and 1,767 men wounded, and 687 officers and men missing.

On June 15th, the day of the Japanese victory at Telissu, three warships of the Vladivostock squadron attacked three Japanese transports, two of which were destroyed, while one escaped. Admiral Kamimura, hearing of the occurrence, started in pursuit of the

Russian ships, but they eluded him and retreated to Vladivostock, a fortress which was in daily terror of attack. Half the population had fled and business was described as ruined. On June 17th General Linievitch, the commandant, issued an order "urging women and children to leave," and warning them that, if they remained "without good reason," they might be expelled.

It was said of the Russian troops, during the war with Turkey in 1876, that when they crossed the Russian borders they began to die, and that far more men had perished on the march to Plevna than had been slain during that memorable siege. The Russian army in Siberia was now said to be dwindling away, but from a different cause, namely, desertion.

Both combatants were now forced to borrow money in foreign countries or raise it within their own borders. A Russian loan of £30,000,000 was issued in Paris; a Japanese loan of £10,000,000 was issued and over-subscribed at London and New York. At home the Japanese were subscribing freely to domestic loans, £8,600,000 being paid in at Tokio, Osaka, and Yokohama in a single day. The Mikado himself is said to have subscribed £2,000,000, an amount equal to the sum voted to him by the Diet, in December, 1898, out of the Chinese indemnity fund.

Meanwhile General Kuroki's army was not idle. On June 7th he occupied Saimatse, a further stage on the road to Liao-Yang, after a skirmish in which the Russians left twenty-three killed on the field, besides two officers and five men prisoners. On June 8th, 9th, and 10th he advanced three further stages to Liuchatai, Chanchisih, and Tungyonpu, the last-named place being midway between Wichu and Liao-Yang.

On June 16th Kuroki defeated a combined force of Russians and Chunchuses at Luai-jen. Kuropatkin



was now telegraphing to the Tsar to say that the Japanese under Kuroki were apparently falling back, retreating rather than advancing on the road to Liao-Yang, and the Imperial spirits were rising, in consequence, at the Tsarskoe Selo. Kuropatkin apparently did not give Kuroki credit for strategic ability.

The Russians facing Kuroki were now entrenched in the passes of a range of hills which lie some thirty miles south-east of Liao-Yang. On the 23rd the army of Takushan, advancing from the south and co-operating with Kuroki, expelled the Russians from several positions, after a severe brush, burying sixty of the Russian dead. On the 26th, Kuroki's army attacked and outflanked the main Russian force and compelled it to retire, leaving the passes in possession of the Japanese. "The Russian cavalry and infantry," says Kuropatkin, "while retiring under the pressure of the Japanese, ascertained that the attack was made by superior forces. Besides their frontal attack, the Japanese turned both flanks of our troops, occupying the Fenshuiling and Motienling passes."

In the evening, when the Russians had fallen back upon the Taling pass, Kuropatkin says: "The Japanese continued their advance against our position on that pass. The troops of our advance guard for some time offered resistance, but, finding they were in danger of being outflanked by other Japanese troops, they fell back." The Motienling pass is about thirty miles south-east of Liao-Yang.

The front of the Japanese armies, under Oku, Nodzu, and Kuroki, now extended for a distance of 150 miles across the base of the Liao-Tong peninsula, and the Russians were everywhere falling back before their advance. Behind this prolonged line of Japanese troops lay Port Arthur and its fleet, all the Russian leased lands on Liao-Tong, and the coveted kingdom

of Korea, the distance between them and the main Russian army constantly increasing.

On June 23rd, the day that the army of Takushan attacked the Russians in the passes, an important event took place at Port Arthur. At eleven o'clock in the forenoon the whole fleet emerged slowly through the narrow mouth of the harbour, being piloted out by merchant ships. It was a difficult process owing to the condition of the channel, strewn as it was with sunken vessels, and owing to the danger of submarine mines. But at 3 p.m. the operation was over, and a powerful fleet of twenty-five war-vessels put out to sea. Under the efficient management of brave men so great a force should have been able to achieve wonders. Under a Nelson or a Drake it would have swept the Yellow Sea. From many points of view the appearance of the Russian fleet was a marvellous event, almost amounting to a resurrection. All the damaged ships had been repaired and were in their places with the squadron, which consisted of six battleships, five cruisers, and fourteen destroyers. The *Tsarevitch*, a new battleship, built in 1902, 13,100 tons displacement, 16,300 indicated horse-power, and with a speed of 18 knots an hour, was the flagship, and Rear-Admiral Vitoft was in command.

While the fleet was tediously emerging three divisions of Japanese destroyers and torpedo-boats attacked the vessels which were clearing the way for the battleships and large cruisers, but they drew off when the dauntless *Novik* opened fire on them. Undismayed by the attack of the Japanese small craft, the whole fleet steamed towards Shantung and the Yellow Sea, the *Novik* leading the way. Their intention was either to escape into the open sea and carry the war to the enemy's coasts, finding their services no longer useful to the beleaguered fortress, or to fight

out the issue with Admiral Togo. A small squadron of Japanese cruisers appeared on the horizon, and the Russian admiral gave them chase. They were decoys acting under Togo's orders.

The Russian fleet formed in line ahead, the six battleships, *Tsarevitch*; *Retvisan*, built in 1901, 12,700 tons; *Poltava*, built in 1894, 10,960 tons; *Sevastopol*, built in 1895, 10,960 tons; *Peresviet*, built in 1898, 12,674 tons; and *Pobieda*, built in 1899, 12,674 tons; and the five cruisers, *Bayan*, built in 1900, 7,500 tons; *Pallada*, *Diana*, and *Askold*, sister ships, built in 1899, 6,500 tons each; and the little *Novik*, together with the fourteen destroyers. The Japanese cruiser squadron fled towards the south-east, and the Russians followed them; and about 6 p.m. Admiral Vitoft came into full view of Admiral Togo's battleship squadron, which was lying in wait for him.

The Russians, apparently, were not prepared to give battle, for they changed their course due south. Togo followed them at full speed, his decoy cruisers leading, his battleships following at a distance of about a mile, his destroyers on his port beam, and his chief cruiser squadron bringing up the rear. After steaming thus for an hour, the Russian admiral seems to have abandoned hope of getting out of the Gulf of Pechili, and apparently determined to fight. The battle-flags were hoisted in both fleets, Togo steaming parallel to Vitoft at a distance of eight miles. Presently Togo changed his course and bore in towards the Russians. But Vitoft would not close, and changed his course, so that the fleets were once more sailing in parallel lines.

Again Togo bore in, again Vitoft bore off. When this manœuvre had been several times repeated the fleets found themselves steering due west, and the Russian admiral headed straight for Port Arthur, determined to evade a fight. It was now eight o'clock,

and night was beginning to fall. The Japanese destroyers dashed in amongst the Russians and threw their battleships out of line, but the thickening darkness rendered a general engagement impracticable. The Russian fleet dropped their anchors outside the harbour, it being impossible to navigate the entrance channel in the dark. The Japanese torpedo-boats kept up an incessant attack during the night, but the official Russian report claimed that "the torpedo attacks were successfully repulsed, all the Russian ships entering the port the following morning."

Admiral Togo's report was wanting in its customary accuracy. His telegram said: "At least one battleship, *Peresviet* type, appeared sunk; and one battleship, *Sevastopol* type, and one cruiser, *Diana* type, seen towed into port next morning, apparently seriously damaged." Those ships may have been damaged, and the battleship which Admiral Togo thought had been sunk may have entered port under cover of darkness.

Thus ended the memorable attempt of the Port Arthur fleet to escape from its imprisonment on June 23, 1904. Shortly after these events at Port Arthur it was announced that the Baltic Fleet would leave for the Far East in the middle of August.

On June 27th Admiral Togo's torpedo-boat flotilla attacked and sank a Russian guardship "of two masts and three funnels" outside Port Arthur, and also capsized and sank a Russian destroyer. The Japanese were now active all over the peninsula of Liao-Tong, the land army acting in conjunction with the fleet in several attacks on the heights around Port Arthur. On June 26th they attacked Heights 131 and 126.[1] The Russians repulsed them three times, but the

[1] The peninsula on which Port Arthur stands is studded with knolls, which the Russians identified by their various heights in metres above sea-level.

Japanese vessels kept up a constant cannonade, and at half-past three in the afternoon of the same day the Japanese attacked Hwinshan, which was held by two battalions of Chasseurs, and the Russians were forced to retire, though they were supported by their torpedo-boats, as the Japanese were turning their position from the rear and causing them heavy losses." The loss of the Heights meant a Russian retirement of some miles. Japanese detachments were now advancing from Dalny and driving the Russians westward into the circumscribed area around Port Arthur.

On June 30th some Russian torpedo-boats from Vladivostock entered the Korean port of Gensan, fired upon the settlements, and sank a steamer and sailing-vessel. They then left and joined the Vladivostock squadron, which was waiting for them outside the port. The Japanese admiral started in pursuit, but failed to catch them.

The end of June had now arrived, and the Russians had as yet done nothing decisive. It was freely reported that dissension was rife amongst their commanders of all grades. A reliable correspondent at Niuchwang[1] vouches for having seen "a translation of a letter from an officer in high command under General Kuropatkin to a brother officer," in which the writer thus described the quarrels of his colleagues and superiors: "It is sad to see our officers constantly quarrelling. They are divided into cliques, and so fight for their own interests that Japan, the common enemy, is forgotten. Every one, from the Viceroy and General Kuropatkin down to the insignificant subalterns, quarrels and is unwilling to obey orders. Jealousy and suspicion are rampant throughout the army. The members of our secret service are so busy spying on each other that they cannot apprehend spies, and Japanese agents carry on their work with impunity."

[1] Reuter's correspondent with the Russians.

CHAPTER XV

Continued Russian retreat—Oku captures Kaiping—Kuroki captures Fenshuiling Pass—Kuropatkin's philosophy—Keller defeated in the east, Sakharoff in the west—Oku captures Tashichiao—Japanese occupy Niuchwang—Oku takes Haicheng—Domestic troubles in Russia—The Tsar and Stoessel—Defeat and death of Keller at Yangzeling.

ON July 4th, under cover of a thick fog, two battalions of Russian infantry, having attacked General Kuroki's outposts at Motienling, were repulsed thrice and pursued four miles westward in the direction of Liao-Yang, having left thirty dead and fifty wounded on the field. On July 5th the Japanese repulsed a body of 1,300 Russian cavalry, which attacked them near the Fenshuiling Pass. On the 6th the Japanese expelled 300 Russian cavalry, and occupied Hsienchang, thirty miles north-east of Saimatse.

On July 6th General Oku commenced operations against the important post of Kaiping, situated on the Port Arthur Railway close to the coast, twenty miles south of the treaty port of Niuchwang, and one hundred miles north of Port Arthur. The Russians were said to have concentrated 30,000 men in the locality with a reserve force of 30,000 more at Haicheng, a point midway between Kaiping and their headquarters at Liao-Yang.

Oku's army from the south-west, Kuroki's army from

the south-east, and the Takushan army, under Nodzu, from the south, were all converging upon Liao-Yang, where Kuropatkin had apparently determined to give battle, while a fourth army under Nogi was besieging Port Arthur. The entire coast of the Liao-Tong peninsula was now cleared of Russians, except for Kaiping and Niuchwang, and the beleaguered garrison at Port Arthur. In their retreat northward from Port Arthur, along the railway line, the Russians had now reached Kaiping. The Japanese attacked them and after three days' fighting, from July 6th to 9th, General Oku reported that he "finally occupied Kaiping and the neighbouring heights." The Russians abandoned Kaiping without any of that ferocious ardour which characterised their fights at Kinchau and Telissu.

Oku's advance was as sustained as Kuroki's. Though he did not cover as much ground, he had even greater difficulties to contend with. Port Arthur having been cut off after the fight at Kinchau, and Stoessel being compelled to retire upon his fortifications, Oku had then advanced north steadily along the railway line. He had forced Stackelberg back, and now we find him at least fifty miles farther north, and, after three days' fighting, successfully dislodging the Russians from Kaiping and driving them northwards once again. Kuropatkin's columns were retiring stage by stage to the base selected by their commander at Liao-Yang, before the continued advance of Oku, Nodzu, and Kuroki, while the outer defences of Port Arthur were continually shrinking in area before the assaults of Nogi.

The Japanese fleet was unremittingly busy outside Port Arthur and Dalny. Before leaving Dalny the Russians had covered the waters with mines, the clearing away of which was a dangerous and arduous work; and during the operations on July 5th one of Admiral

Togo's cruisers, the *Kaimon*, struck a Russian mine outside Dalny and sank. The Japanese now possessed the railway for a distance of 125 miles inland from Dalny up to Kaiping. The Russians in their retreat had damaged the line; but the Japanese had restored it to working order, and it was now in constant use for the forwarding of supplies to General Oku.

On Kuroki's side, all the most important passes on the road to Liao-Yang had been carried by the Japanese; and Kuropatkin would be forced either to give fight in the open at Liao-Yang or retreat still further back as Alexieff had done. Kuropatkin had now an immense army at his disposal, and was in a position to hurl large bodies of troops at any desirable object of attack. He sent forward 20,000 men, under General Keller, to make a demonstration before Kuroki's position at Motienling on July 17th, but Keller was repulsed by the Japanese after some stubborn fighting, and was pursued as far as Kunteapaotzu.

An analysis of Kuropatkin's report of this engagement may enable us to see why he had gained the reputation of being a famous strategist. It will be noticed that he writes learnedly on military matters, and in a manner calculated to impress persons who do not belong to the military profession, as, for instance, M. Witte, the Minister of Finance. Kuropatkin's mind seems to work somewhat after the manner of those amateur detectives who have become so popular in recent fiction. He is not prepared to take any blame upon himself, either for inadequate information, or for the defeats his troops had to undergo.

"On our eastern front," he says, "after the occupation by General Kuroki's army of the pass in the Fenshuiling chain, our information concerning his forces and disposition was in general inadequate.

"According to some accounts his army had been reinforced, and General Kuroki had even extended a portion of his forces towards Saimatse. Other reports stated that a display of his troops had been made in the direction of the Ta-ling Pass and of Suiyen. There were even indications that General Kuroki had transferred his headquarters from Tsakhekau to Touinpu.

"On the strength of information received, and on the basis of reconnaissances made, the hypothesis was formed that the principal forces of the enemy were concentrated around Lienshankwan, and that their advance guards had been strengthened in the passes of Siaokaoling, Wafankwan, Sinkialing, Lakholing, and Papanling, as well as at the Sybeyling Pass, four kilometres north of the road and off the height of the Siaokaoling."

Now it is obvious that, while such a style of report may be of interest, as showing the workings of the writer's mind, provided that the calculations made eventuated in some important gain, it is the style of man better suited for the War Office than the field of battle. Kuropatkin seems to be a military Sherlock Holmes; but, unfortunately for Russia, Kuropatkin was not a mere fictitious marionette, and his lucubrations did not work out advantageously in practice. If he succeeded in saving himself and in avoiding a wholesale disaster to his army, it must be remembered that he also failed in all that he had been sent into Manchuria to accomplish. He allowed the Japanese to occupy the entire Liao-Tong peninsula and Korea, he deserted Port Arthur, and retreated before the Japanese advance into the depths of Manchuria, keeping the railway carefully open behind him for his final disappearance into Siberia, if and when that should become a necessity. It was not with that inglorious end in view that Russia went to war.

If the Japanese were in a position to cut off Kuropatkin on the north of Liao-Yang, we have no doubt he would have entrenched himself, kept up an intermittent fight, as Stoessel did, until his provisions gave out and all prospect of relief had disappeared, and then he would have surrendered. There is a species of inactive strategy which borders upon cowardice, and if it has the appearance of wisdom, it is also near akin to folly. Every coward is a strategist, though every strategist is not a coward.

Kuropatkin sent Keller forward on this occasion with the large force of fourteen battalions and twelve guns. He instructed him "to start with the object of capturing the pass, *but to act according to the strength of the forces which he should find opposed to him.*" This was a typical specimen of Kuropatkin's military wisdom. We need not be surprised to learn that the result was failure; "General Keller found the strength of the enemy so great compared with ours that he decided not to continue the fight and not to bring up either the special or general reserves. . . . In consequence he decided about 10.30 a.m. to withdraw his troops to the positions originally occupied by them in the Yanzeling Pass. The troops returned slowly step by step and in perfect order, covered by the fire of a field battery which had been brought into action."

If Generals Kuroki, Nodzu, and Nogi, or Admiral Togo had acted on such gingerly principles, Japanese troops would never have landed on the mainland of Korea or Liao-Tong.

The result of Keller's "demonstration" was that the Japanese "made an offensive movement," and the Russians had to fall back upon their reserves at Ikhavuan. Kuropatkin winds up his report by stating that "in consequence of a sleepless night and the heat of the day the troops were greatly fatigued, the men

having been more than fifteen hours afoot and fighting." The conviction that the entire movement was labour lost must have been even more distressing to the men than the fatigue and loss of sleep. While Keller was thus demonstrating in front of Kuroki, Sakharoff had been opposed to Oku and was engaged in writing reports to minimise the Japanese victory at Kaiping. He said the affair was merely "a rear-guard action." This suggests the question—Why were the Russians retreating, and why was it a rear-guard action, when Port Arthur lay a comparatively short distance to the south and was in urgent need of relief? When Kuropatkin himself showed such a high sense of the importance of self-preservation, how could the inferior commanders be expected to display courage and self-sacrifice?

"In accordance with the directions of the commander of the detachment," says General Sakharoff, "our rear-guard began to retire slowly from Kaiping, after which the detachments occupying Kaiping station and Tsiaotsiatun were ordered to retire, and all the rear-guards retired northwards, under the protection of a position which had been occupied on the adjacent heights. All the troops," concludes General Sakharoff, "acting upon orders received in time, forced the enemy to deploy, and thus, without engaging in a fight, retired in perfect order towards the positions and bivouacs assigned for them for the night."

In a word, everything was managed altogether comfortably and pleasantly for the Russian officers and men, and they retreated without a blush of shame before the advancing Japanese.

During these operations, Alexieff, the Viceroy of the Far East, was at Harbin, sending telegrams to Russia, in which he duplicated all the information sent by the retreating commanders, as if the mere transcription of

the reports by his vermilion pencil gave them a fresh interest and importance.

On July 18th, the day after Kuropatkin's demonstration, General Kuroki followed up the Russians to their entrenched position at Hsihoyen, on the Liao-Yang road, north of Lienshankwan, where they had constructed strong defence works. The Japanese attacked the Russian position, and a sanguinary fight ensued; but at 5.30 p.m. Kuroki's main force "penetrated the enemy's position on the heights north-west of Hsihoyen, while the detachment facing the enemy's right cut off the retreat." At eight o'clock the Japanese occupied Hsihoyen, and the main force of the Russians "fled in confusion to Anping." The Japanese casualties were 2 officers and 70 men killed, 16 officers and 436 men wounded. The Russians left 131 corpses on the field. Such was the result of Kuropatkin's analytical strategy.

On the west General Oku began an attack on Tashichiao, a station on the railway about twenty miles north of Kaiping, the position to which Sakharoff conducted his masterly and comfortable retreat on July 9th from Kaiping. The Japanese strove during the entire day, on July 25th, to dislodge the Russians from the heights of Tapingling, where the enemy had a large army strongly posted in fortified positions. Oku says that "the enemy consisted of about five divisions, with at least 100 guns." At 10 p.m., after the long day's fighting, a detachment from Oku's right wing dislodged the enemy from their position. The Japanese continued fighting all through the night, and at daybreak they had captured "all the positions commanding Tashichiao," and were pursuing the enemy towards that place.

Kuropatkin's account of these operations bears evidence of his smug self-satisfaction. His troops were

retiring, and he was proud of it. "On the 25th instant," he telegraphs to the Tsar, "after an insignificant cannonade and fusillade with our retiring troops, the enemy occupied Tashichiao, and about a division of their infantry moved a little further northward by the main road." General Oku says the position from which the Russians were driven was one "of enormous advantage." Kuropatkin himself was on the field, and had determined to make a final stand against the Japanese advance, but either his own courage or that of his troops, or both, must have failed him; and, as usual, "the withdrawal of the troops from their position was effected in perfect order."

On the following day, July 26th, Oku advanced northward in pursuit of the Russians, or, in Kuropatkin's euphuistic language, "moved a little further northward."

Kuropatkin was forced to withdraw from the treaty port of Niuchwang as a consequence of this "insignificant cannonade" at Tashichiao. "Niuchwang was occupied on July 25th by Japanese forces," says the Japanese commander; "a detachment of our cavalry was sent there first, and later a detachment of infantry." Refugees immediately began to return to the town, business was resumed, and confidence restored under Japanese management. Before the Russians had left they had burned the railway station and destroyed a great deal of other property.

Kuropatkin was now completely driven back from the coast-line of the Gulf of Liao-Tong. But his self-satisfaction was undiminished; and while Generals Oku, Nodzu, and Kuroki were advancing upon him, justly proud of their self-sacrifice in the best interests of their country, he was still engaged in a labyrinth of intricate strategy, having for its end self-preservation. The Japanese casualties were 10 officers and 130 men

killed, 47 officers and 878 men wounded. The estimate of the Russian casualties in this "insignificant cannonade" at Tashichiao was 2,000; but, following their usual custom, they did not supply precise details of their losses.

The next important station on the railway is Haicheng, about twenty miles north of Tashichiao, and towards this the Russians were now retreating. General Oku followed them up closely and attacked them on the road on July 30th. Fierce fighting ensued and continued without intermission until nightfall on July 31st, the Russians being compelled to retreat during the night to Haicheng, leaving six field guns, 150 dead bodies, and several prisoners in the hands of the Japanese.

At home in Russia serious discontent was beginning to manifest itself. General Bobrikoff, Governor of Finland, had been assassinated at Helsingfors on June 16th; M. Andrieff, Vice-Governor of Elizabethpol, was murdered at Agdshakent on July 17th; M. de Plehve, Minister of the Interior, had been blown to atoms in the streets of St. Petersburg by a bomb on July 28th; and an attempt was made soon afterwards on the life of M. Mouravieff, Minister of Justice.

The modern world presents few more gloomy subjects of consideration than the black gulf of separation which yawns between the people of Russia and the governing caste in that unhappy country. All those grand schemes of advancement in Manchuria, meant to culminate in the subjugation of China, had been undertaken, not in the interests of the Russian people, but for the aggrandisement of the Emperor, the Grand Dukes, and the small coterie who form the Russian oligarchy. The Trans-Siberian Railway was a magnificent conception; but, like the Pyramids of Egypt, it was built by the forced labour of slaves who took no

interest in what they were doing. As the Pyramids remain for a testimony to all time of the absolute rule of the Pharaohs and the complete subjugation of the *fellaheen*, so does the career of Russia in Northern, Central, and Eastern Asia stand on record as a witness to the autocratic power of the Tsar and his relatives, and to the enslaved condition of the masses of the Russian people.

But the down-trodden Russians were now getting restless; and, while the Tsar was pursuing his "historic aims" in the Far East, his poor people were hurling bombs at Imperial Ministers and Governors on the shores of the Baltic.

Towards the close of July the Japanese army investing Port Arthur displayed no less activity than the armies which were advancing against Kuropatkin. On July 26th, 27th, and 28th a prolonged attack was made on General Stoessel, whose report to the Tsar displays all that sanguine vaingloriousness so characteristic of Russian military commanders throughout the war: "I am happy to report," he said, "that the troops repulsed all the Japanese attacks with enormous losses. The enthusiasm of the garrison was extraordinary. The fleet assisted in the defence by bombarding the Japanese flank. Our losses during the three days were about 1,500 men and 40 officers killed and wounded."

The Tsar's reply to Stoessel's telegram was no less vainglorious. "I direct you," said Nicholas, "to congratulate the troops, sailors, and inhabitants of Port Arthur, in my name and on behalf of the whole of Russia, on the successes gained in the fighting on the 26th, 27th, and 28th of July. I am fully convinced of their absolute readiness to uphold the glory of our arms by their unbounded bravery. I warmly thank all. May the Most High bless their heroic deeds,

which entail such heavy sacrifices, and may He protect the fortress of Port Arthur from the attacks of the enemy!"

It is hard for British citizens to understand the mental position of the writer of such a document. It would be a dreary waste of a world, indeed, if Nicholas were in truth a co-partner with the omnipotent Creator, and able to secure Divine aid for his projects in the West or in the Far East. The Most High did not grant the petition of Nicholas's prayer. The Muscovite's pride was quickly followed by a fall, and on July 30th Stoessel had to abandon his important position on Wolf's Hill. "In view of the enormous superiority of the enemy's forces," he explains, "our troops received orders to retire without fighting on the next positions." And he adds, after the manner of Kuropatkin, "the movement was effected in complete order. The *morale* of the troops is excellent and their health is good."

The Russian fleet at Port Arthur was now giving considerable assistance to the garrison. The cruisers were moving in and out, and the destroyers and torpedo-boats were engaging in constant skirmishes with the Japanese. Togo displayed extraordinary caution, being apparently satisfied that the Russian fleet was ultimately destined to become his prey, and being assured of its unwillingness to appeal to the final issue of a fight. But he did not on that account lapse into inactivity. Some of his men performed prodigies of valour during the month of July. Lieutenant Yokowo, for instance, commander of the torpedo-boat attached to the battleship *Fuji*, swam into Port Arthur harbour three times, towing fish-torpedoes behind him!

The end of July had now come, and the Russians, under the leadership of Kuropatkin, had done nothing but retreat, having been beaten from position after

position, and they considered themselves fortunate that they still held the railway which extended into the friendly solitudes of Siberia at their rear.

August had now come, and the first day of the month was signalised in Russia by the murder of Colonel Bogoslavsky, Chief Administrator of the Surmalin District at Igdir. On August 2nd Kuropatkin says, "Our troops retired from Haicheng by the Anshanchan road." It must have made little difference to the Tsar which route they had retreated by. But it is important to observe, from this telegram of Kuropatkin's, the want of stamina and vitality which is a characteristic of the poorly-fed and large-bodied Russian soldier.

"In spite of the extreme heat of the day," says the Commander-in-Chief, using words which might well have been stereotyped, "the movement was carried out in perfect order by the men, without any molestation by the enemy." But the description which follows is valuable to any nation which may yet have to break a lance with Russia: "Every effort was made to lighten the burdens of the infantry, and carts were given to each company to carry the men's great-coats and kit-bags. Nevertheless, the heat of the sun was so intense that, in spite of the measures taken to relieve the soldiers, the number of men who succumbed to sun-stroke was considerable."

It was now advanced, as an excuse for the Russian retreat upon Haicheng, that the last battle with the Japanese had been fought at a temperature of 112 deg. Fahrenheit. It was also ominously reported at this time that Kuropatkin had sent a message to his rival, Alexieff, ordering that "useless civilian elements of the population" should be removed from Harbin, "in order that winter quarters might be prepared for the Russian army." There was no fear that Kuropatkin's

retreat would be cut off for want of ample precautions for the comfort of himself and his fellow-officers. He was looking out for winter quarters at the end of July, when the thermometer was at 112 deg. Fahrenheit.

The opening of the month of August, which was signalised by the Russian retreat from Haicheng on the west, was remarkable for a spirited advance on the east by General Kuroki. At daybreak on August 1st the Japanese carried the principal Russian positions, and "bivouacked that night in battle formation." They did not retire comfortably to their tents, as Kuropatkin would have done under similar circumstances. Next morning they resumed their attack at daybreak, chased the Russians from their reserve position at Ikhavuan, and captured several field-guns. The centre Japanese army, under General Nodzu, called the army of Takushan, also assailed the Russians. General Kuroki made an attack on General Keller's army in the Yangzeling Pass, and a severe battle ensued, during which General Keller was killed and heavy loss inflicted upon the Russians. After Keller's death "the Russians abandoned the advanced positions in the Yangzeling, and retired in the direction of Liao-Yang." The three Japanese armies—eastern, central, and western—were now drawing close together. The extent of their front had diminished from 180 miles to a little more than thirty miles, from the western position on the north of Haicheng to Kuroki's position beyond the Motienling Pass.

General Keller's death was, in its way, as serious a loss to the Russians as Admiral Makaroff's had been. He had the reputation of being a successful soldier, and if he had not had the misfortune to serve under so profound a strategist as Kuropatkin, he might have inflicted severe damage on the enemy. On his arrival at the front Kuropatkin is said to have presented him to

the troops as a commander "destined to revive the brilliant traditions of Skobeleff."

After the defeat of Keller's army, General Kuroki had captured 8 officers and 149 men, as well as 2 field-guns. The fight had been in many respects a desperate one. The Japanese detachment had "turned the flank of the retreating Russian column, consisting of three infantry regiments with four guns, and severely fired upon its whole line at a distance from 200 to 1,000 yards." The Russians asked for a truce in order to carry away their wounded, and the Japanese permitted them to do so. The Japanese had gained ten miles on the road to Liao-Yang as the result of this fight.

On August 4th General Oku reported that the enemy had been "continually retreating northward since August 2nd," while the Japanese were following him up and occupying positions along the railway line to Liao-Yang. Oku reported that after the "insignificant cannonade" outside Haicheng, the Japanese had buried 700 Muscovite corpses.

All the Russian prospects now centred upon what they should be able to achieve at Liao-Yang, where they had accumulated a vast amount of provisions and warlike stores. The superstitious and illiterate moujiks were growing disheartened by continued reverses; but even more ominous, as a symptom of the Russian failure, were the praises which the Japanese generals now began to shower upon Kuropatkin. They congratulated him on having extricated his army from the Liao-Tong peninsula without wholesale disaster! Praise from the enemy is always a cruel kindness to the recipient. The strategist who had gone to Tokio to study the Japanese leaders at close quarters, and who, as a result of that investigation, had announced that he intended to capture Tokio itself, must now have realised how mistaken had been his estimate of the Japanese.

CHAPTER XVI

Naval battle off Port Arthur—Defeat and dispersal of the Russian Fleet—Death of Admiral Vitoft—Ukhtomsky and the battleships return to Port Arthur—Fortunes of the *Tsarevitch*, *Reshitelni*, *Diana*, *Askold*, and *Novik*—Kamimura defeats the Vladivostock squadron — Destruction of the *Rurik* — Port Arthur summoned to surrender—Christening of the Tsarevitch —The great pitched battle of Liao-Yang—Defeat of the Russians and retreat to Mukden.

GENERAL NOGI renewed his attack on Port Arthur, and a severe three-days' fight took place on August 8th, 9th, and 10th, during which the Russian losses were officially returned at seven officers and 248 men killed, 35 officers and 1,553 men wounded, one officer and 83 men missing. During this terrific onslaught the position of the Russian fleet in the harbour became absolutely untenable; and, with the desperation of rats in a trap, they determined to escape, regardless of the fate which might be in store for them in the open sea.

On the morning of Wednesday, August 10th, the entire Russian fleet, with the exception of the *Bayan* and guardships, emerged from Port Arthur and steamed in a south-easterly direction, as it did on the occasion of its first sortie on June 23rd. Admiral Togo's combined fleet pursued it towards the east, and for some time it seemed as if the Russians were about to make good their escape. Admiral Togo came up



A JAPANESE BAYONET ATTACK.

At daybreak on May 1st General Kuroki [illegible] commenced [illegible] stormed the enemy's trenches and [illegible] possession of the height north-west of Chu-lien-cheng [illegible] 85

with them shortly after noon, and the battle began. "Sharp fighting continued from 1 p.m. until sunset," says Togo; "the enemy apparently suffered heavy damage, and his fire became greatly slackened, while his battle formation was completely deranged." But night fell and Togo remained in ignorance of the wherabouts of the Russian fleet which seemed to have escaped him. His first report says, "*The Askold*, the *Novik*, the *Tsarevitch*, the *Pallada*, and some destroyers fled southwards, and the rest probably fled to Port Arthur, after a night attack by our destroyer and torpedo-boat flotillas." He says that five of the six Russian battleships were believed to be seriously damaged. "Both of the *Pobieda's* masts were broken and the big guns ceased working. The *Retvisan* apparently suffered much owing to our concentrated shells at a distance of 3,500 metres."

The Russian fleet consisted of six battleships, already specified, and four cruisers, the *Askold*, *Diana*, *Pallada*, and *Novik*, and eight torpedo-boats. The opposing Japanese fleet consisted of six battleships, the *Mikasa* (Admiral Togo's flagship), *Asahi*, *Fuji*, *Yoshima*, *Shikishima*, and *Chinyan*, eleven cruisers, and thirty torpedo-boats, arranged in three detachments. The commander of the *Mikasa* says: "On the morning of the 10th of August the guardships telegraphed information of the enemy's sortie. The news was received with delight. Admiral Togo rapidly made all dispositions. His plan was to draw the Russians as far south as possible, in order to prevent a repetition of the *fiasco* of June 23rd. He did not know whether the enemy's destination was Vladivostock, and therefore steered south, being constantly informed by his scouts of the enemy's movements. The squadron gradually approached, the Japanese squadron being on the east. At 12.30 p.m., being then thirty miles south

of Port Arthur, Admiral Togo signalled to his ships to go into action. The Russians thereupon formed in single column line ahead, their force consisting of six battleships, with the *Tsarevitch* in the van, four cruisers, eight destroyers, and one hospital ship. At 1 p.m. the action began. Twice the lines approached and twice they receded. There was a fierce cannonade on both sides."

The Japanese officer relates that the Russian missiles "nearly all flew wide, whereas the Japanese gunners were absolutely calm and scored hits with few misses." The fight lasted two and a half hours, and both sides drew off and rested for an hour. The battle recommenced. The Russians opened fire boldly; but having fought for some time, steamed off towards the south-east. The Japanese pursued them, and "the *Tsarevitch* was struck by a seven-inch shell below the waterline on the port side and suddenly turned to starboard." The accident to the flagship threw all the Russian line into confusion. Helms were put to port and starboard in a frantic effort to avoid collision, while the Japanese seized the opportunity to pour a hot fire into the congregated Russian warships at a range of between two and three miles.

During this terrible *mêlée*, Admiral Vitoft, in command of the squadron, was killed on board the flagship *Tsarevitch*, the captain of the vessel being severely wounded at the same time. This was the crucial moment when the Japanese shot had struck the vessel below the waterline. The Russian account says: "The battleship's engines and steering-gear were damaged and she was obliged to stop for forty minutes. This forced the other ships to manœuvre around her."

Admiral Vitoft's last signal, run up to the masthead before his death, is said to have been: "*Remember the Emperor's orders not to return to Port Arthur.*"

"At a quarter to six the Japanese fleet had come within forty cables, and the second battle opened," says the official Russian despatch. "The *Tsarevitch* put about and, steaming along the line, signalled: *The Admiral transfers the command.*" Rear-Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky was now in command of the squadron, Rear-Admiral Reitzenstein, on board the *Askold*, being in command of the cruisers. Reitzenstein says, "The fight lasted twenty minutes. Shells fell like hail, and did much damage to the *Askold*, which, however succeeded in getting through the enemy's line, followed by the *Pallada* and *Diana*. The Japanese cruisers started in pursuit, but, steaming at a speed of twenty knots, we rapidly drew away from them. The cruiser *Novik*, which possesses a good turn of speed, was allowed to act independently."

The Russian fire had been silenced at 8.30; night fell, and the combat terminated. The Russian battleships, cruisers, and destroyers steamed off at full speed under cover of darkness, pursued by the Japanese torpedo craft. The result of the battle was a victory for the Japanese. The Russian fleet was dispersed and heavily damaged; but it was not annihilated, and, in that sense, the Japanese triumph was far from complete. The fight had been to a considerable extent a duel between the *Mikasa* and *Tsarevitch*, resulting in the most brilliant of triumphs for the Japanese flagship. "The Russian fire had been mainly concentrated on the *Mikasa*; but," says her commander, "Admiral Togo and his staff were quite unconcerned and directed every operation." Like Nelson, Togo was always to be found where the fight was most deadly; and the *Mikasa's* casualties were four officers and 28 men killed, ten officers and 68 men wounded. The Japanese casualties, on the whole, were trivial as

compared with the importance of the battle and the damage inflicted on the Russians. The cruiser *Yakumo* had one officer and eleven men killed and ten men wounded; the *Nishin*, cruiser, had seven officers and nine men killed, two officers and fifteen men wounded; the *Kasuga*, cruiser, had ten men wounded; and there were some casualties in the other ships.

Let us now follow the fortunes of the scattered Russian fleet. The crippled *Tsarevitch* had to be deserted by the other battleships; and, accompanied by three destroyers, crept away under her own steam towards the south-east, having Prince Ukhtomsky's orders to make for Kiao-Chau. The big ship was harassed all the night by the Japanese torpedo-boats, and when day dawned found herself close to Shantung. She succeeded in making the German port, and there found the cruiser *Novik* and a torpedo destroyer already arrived.

The five remaining battleships, under Prince Ukhtomsky, and one cruiser returned to Port Arthur under cover of darkness. It was Rear-Admiral Mattusevitch who sent the detailed account to the Tsar, and he closed his narration thus: "I am happy to be a witness to your Majesty of the unexampled bravery of both officers and men during these desperate encounters." Prince Ukhtomsky was censured for returning to Port Arthur with the battleships, and was superseded in the command by Admiral Skrydloff, the return of the battleships being described as "the greatest misfortune that had befallen Russia since the outbreak of the war." It has been said of Ukhtomsky that, "like many other Russian Admirals, he had never commanded a ship; he was able, however, to navigate his own interests through the dangerous tempests of the court; and so successfully did he manage to steer that he was soon Rear-

Admiral."[1] It is said that it was by Alexieff's orders that Admiral Vitoft had undertaken the sortie, as the Japanese had been disastrously bombarding the Russian battleships in Port Arthur. Indeed, the *Bayan* had been so severely damaged that she had not been able to accompany the fleet.

The dauntless *Novik* escaped from Kiao-Chau; and the *Tsarevitch* and the three Russian destroyers got permission to repair in the German dockyard. What a spectacle the *Tsarevitch* must have presented to the Germans when she dropped anchor in Kiao-Chau! What an object-lesson of the might of Japan, the new world-power! The great battleship's rudder-shaft was broken, her lifeboats lost, her masts bent into the form of a cross, her funnels riddled with shot, her bridge twisted, numerous holes visible above her water-line, which had been plugged with wood, and her decks slippery with blood.

Some of the incidents connected with the flight of those Russian ships are calculated to show the barbarous character of the Russian naval officers and seamen. The German Governor came aboard the *Tsarevitch* "to ensure the neutrality of the battleship." Immediately on his appearance the savage Russian sailors, scared out of their superstitious wits at the sight of a stranger, are said to have rushed to their weapons with the object of killing him. At first the Germans appeared to have decided to allow the Russian ships to repair, and then to leave the port one by one. But a Japanese torpedo destroyer steamed into the harbour on August 16th, having on board Admiral Ikadzuki and his staff, who requested to know whether the Germans intended to observe the neutrality laws. The German Governor, who was all

[1] Italian correspondent with the Russians in Manchuria, *The Times*, November, 1904.

politeness to those men of might, replied that the Russian ships had been rendered *hors de combat*, and that their guns had been disabled and their ammunition removed. The Japanese Admiral, accepting the assurance, left the harbour, his flag being saluted punctiliously by the German warships. The services of the four Russian ships at Kiao-Chau were therefore lost to Russia for the remainder of the war.

A Russian torpedo destroyer, the *Reshitelni*, had fled for refuge to the Chinese port of Chifu, being closely pursued by Japanese ships. The Japanese remained outside and patrolled the entrance to the harbour. As there was no sign that the *Reshitelni* intended to come forth, the Japanese entered the Chinese port, where they allege that they found the Russian torpedo destroyer still fully armed. According to the laws of neutrality she should have disarmed as the ships at Kiao-Chau had done. The Japanese sent a party under the command of a lieutenant to inform the commander of the *Reshitelni* that they expected his vessel to leave the port at daybreak, or else surrender. The Japanese account says, "The commander of the Russian vessel refused to accede to the demand; and, while the conference was still going on, he was heard instructing his men to blow up the ship. At the same time he got hold of Lieutenant Tereshima and threw him overboard. Our interpreter was also thrown overboard by the Russian seamen." The Japanese escort were attacked, and a magazine was exploded on board the *Reshitelni*, killing and wounding several Japanese. The Japanese then boarded the Russian destroyer in force and captured her.

Lieutenant Rostachakovski, commander of the *Reshitelni*, gives the following account of the transaction. He says he disarmed his ship and lowered his flag as soon as he had effected a passage through the

two blockading lines of Japanese ships. He was lying innocently in the port of Chifu when "he was piratically attacked by the Japanese." "The Japanese," says Rostachakovski, "approached with two torpedo-boats and a cruiser, and sent a party under the command of an officer as though to enter into *pourparlers*. Not having arms to resist, I gave orders to blow up my ship." The question arises why Rostachakovski should have had ammunition on board his ship if she had been disarmed? In the case of the Russian ships at Kiao-Chau, the German Governor assured the Japanese Admiral that he had removed their ammunition. How could it be said that the *Reshitelni* was disarmed when her magazine was full of powder?

The Russian officer goes on to describe his own conduct, which was quite as savage as that of the sailors of the *Tsarevitch*, who wanted to kill the German Governor: "When the Japanese began to hoist their flag, I insulted the Japanese officer by striking him and throwing him into the water. I then ordered the crew to throw the enemy into the sea. Our resistance, however, was unavailing, and the Japanese took possession of the boat. An explosion occurred in the engine-room and in the fore part of the vessel, but the *Reshitelni* did not sink, and was taken from the port by the Japanese. I hope that they will not be able to take her to one of their ports."

What an example of the temper of the Russians! What chagrin these gigantic barbarians must have endured at having to suffer defeat at the hands of men whose individual weight was not more than half that of the average Russian, and whose stature was almost a foot short of that of the ordinary moujik's! Rostachakovshi was able to throw Tereshima into the sea, as Goliath might have hurled David; but the Japanese were nevertheless, man to man, able to overpower the Russians.

Some Russian destroyers had run aground and were lost, by accident or design, on the Shantung promontory near Wei-hai-wei, and the crews were taken on board a British warship at that place.

The *Diana* escaped and reached the French port of Saigon, in Tonking, where she was detained and compelled to disarm. The *Askold* also escaped; but, owing to the injuries she had received, had to give up her intention of proceeding to Vladivostock, and therefore decided to make for Shanghai, in company with the *Grosovoi*.

They reached that port safely, and there they remained and were not disarmed until August 29th, Admiral Uriu's squadron meanwhile cruising outside the port, with the object of compelling, by their presence, the disarmament of the Russian ships. On August 30th their disarmament was completed and their crews detained.

It is said that the Russian fleet narrowly missed a great opportunity on August 10th, and, at the close of the fight, was actually "within three minutes of victoriously forcing the blockade."[1] Admiral Togo had run up a signal calling his fleet to attention, as he was about to give an order, and had made up his mind "to rally his fleet and retire to Sasebo."

I was informed personally by one of the highest authorities on naval matters in England, that the Japanese guns were completely shaken and put out of gear by certain new strong explosives which Admiral Togo had been using for the first time on that day. The Russians could have escaped, had they known the condition in which the *Mikasa* and other Japanese battleships found themselves after the first battle. It was Ukhtomsky's "inexplicable order to the Russian

[1] Alleged official report by British naval *attaché* on board the *Mikasa*, published in the *Matin*, February 16, 1905.

battleships to return to Port Arthur" which gave the Japanese the victory. Before running up his order to rally, Togo saw the Russian fleet swerving, and he refrained from giving the order. He then feigned an attack on Ukhtomsky's battleships with his torpedo craft, but he was unable to do them any further damage owing to the condition of his own ships. This explains why the *Tsarevitch* escaped to Kiao-Chau, and why the *Diana, Askold,* and *Novik* got safely away to sea.

On August 14th Admiral Kamimura encountered three cruisers of the Vladivostock squadron, which had been doing so much mischief, namely, the *Rossia, Gromoboi,* and *Rurik.* The Russian ships had been steaming south in the expectation of meeting and assisting some of the refugees from Port Arthur. They now fled at sight of the Japanese. But the *Rurik,* being the slowest of the cruisers, was constantly falling behind. Her consorts had to slow down frequently and cover her from the enemy. During these manœuvres the Japanese concentrated their fire on the group of Russian vessels, "with the result that on board all the enemy's ships large conflagrations repeatedly broke out." The *Rurik* was seriously injured, and had a list to port. Her consorts abandoned her, and fled towards Vladivostock, closely followed by the Japanese. A five hours' fight ensued, during which the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi* escaped, but at a quarter past ten a.m. the *Rurik* sank, riddled with shot and shells. The Japanese rescued about 600 of her crew. She was a ship built in 1892, 10,933 tons displacement, 13,250 indicated horse-power, and having a nominal speed of 18 knots an hour. Her consorts, the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi,* had been built respectively in 1896 and 1899. They were fast ships, with an indicated horse-power of 18,000, and a nomi-

nal speed of 20 knots, which enabled them to escape. The damage done by the Japanese guns was calamitous. The *Rossia* had eleven holes made below the water-line, and the *Gromoboi* six. The captain of the *Rossia* was killed, and most of her chief officers wounded. The captain of the *Gromoboi* was seriously wounded, and four of her principal officers were killed. The combined casualties of the two Russian cruisers were 135 killed and 307 wounded. The Japanese loss was 48 killed and 68 wounded.

The only ship of the scattered Russian fleet which succeeded in escaping to Russian territory was the dauntless *Novik*, which found refuge in Korsakovsk Harbour, in the island of Sakhalin. Her progress had been tortuous. Two Japanese cruisers, the *Tsushima* and *Chitose*, had been following her. The *Tsushima* came up with her first and attacked her, but the *Novik* inflicted heavy damage on the Japanese ship and compelled her to withdraw for temporary repairs. The *Chitose* arrived soon after this, but as night had fallen nothing could be done. At dawn on the following day, Sunday, August 21st, the *Chitose* entered Korsakovsk Harbour and shelled the *Novik* continuously for an hour. At the end of this time the plucky Russian cruiser was ashore and on fire, and the *Chitose* steamed away, satisfied to have seen the last of her enemy.

The officers and crew of the brave *Novik* arrived at Vladivostock from Sakhalin on August 29th.

During these engagements it must be admitted that the Russian navy showed some sense of its responsibility and a certain readiness to engage the enemy. But it can never be forgotten for them that, when they were in their full strength, the great combined Russian fleets of Port Arthur and Vladivostock did nothing to prevent the landing of the Japanese on the mainland. They evaded a fight with the Japanese vessels, and

only displayed a tardy courage in sinking Japanese merchantmen and looting neutrals, and in endeavouring to effect their own escape from durance when the Russian army was retreating in discomfiture to Siberia.

Let us now return to Port Arthur. On August 13th the Mikado directed Marshal Oyama—who was now in supreme command of the three advancing Japanese armies under Generals Oku, Nodzu, and Kuroki, as well as of the besieging army under General Nogi at Port Arthur—to summon Port Arthur formally to surrender, and to offer facilities for the removal of non-combatants and a safe conduct to Dalny.

On the two following days, August 14th and 15th, General Nogi made a desperate attack on the fortress, being ably supported from the water by the Japanese ships. He did not succeed in capturing the place, but he gained several important positions; and when the fighting ceased the formal summons to surrender was despatched, under a flag of truce, to General Stoessel.

"This morning," said Stoessel, in a telegram to the Tsar on August 16th, "a Japanese *parlementaire*, Major Yamaoka, presented himself at our advanced posts with a letter signed by General Nogi and Admiral Togo demanding the surrender of the fortress. The proposal was, of course, rejected. I have the happiness to report that the troops are in excellent condition and fight heroically."

Despite the bombastic tone of Stoessel's message to his master, it was evident to shrewd eye-witnesses that Port Arthur was doomed. On August 14th, at the beginning of Nogi's great attack, the United States *attaché* left the place. The French and German *attachés* waited to witness the assault, but they too left by junk on the 17th. It must have been well known from that day forth that, unless Kuropatkin should defeat the Japanese at the impending battle of

Liao-Yang, Stoessel could serve no useful purpose by holding out, and furthermore that it would be henceforth unnecessary for the Japanese to sacrifice human life by making repeated violent attacks upon Port Arthur.

It was amidst such a series of not unmerited misfortunes that the son and heir, so long wished for, was born to the Tsar of Russia. The young prince was christened with great state on Wednesday, August 21st, in the church of the Peterhof Palace. We are told that the Tsar and the Dowager-Empress were conveyed in a gilded state-coach drawn by eight horses, preceded by an escort of hussars and cossacks. When the infant had been baptized Nicholas invested his little son with the insignia of the Order of St. Andrew, and all the bells in St. Petersburg and Moscow began to chime, and salutes of 301 guns conveyed to the inhabitants of the two capitals the important intelligence that the sacrament of baptism had been administered successfully to the baby. There were illuminations at night, and the Tsar, in the effervescence of his joy, issued a manifesto, in which he abolished corporal punishment for peasants, and also for soldiers and sailors charged with first offences. Nicholas also informed the world that his little son weighed about ten and a half pounds, and was, in fact, an infantine Russian giant. In its way the spectacle was pitiable, and little less objectionable, perhaps, than one of Kwang-Su's sacrifices at Peking, celebrated under the patronage of Tszu-Hszi.

On the day that the Tsarevitch was christened the Japanese began their advance upon Kuropatkin's position at Liao-Yang. It was a crucial day for Nicholas and the Grand Dukes. The elaborate baptism of the baby had produced no effect upon the Japanese generals or their sincere, virtuous, cleanly, abstemious, and well-educated troops. Nicholas re-

solved to try its effect upon his own deceived, unwashed, immoral, and illiterate soldiers, and on August 24th General Kuropatkin received the following Imperial message to stiffen him up for the fight with Marshal Oyama: "During the christening of the Tsarevitch the Tsaritza and myself requested the army and navy in our hearts to stand sponsors for his Imperial Highness. May God preserve, during the Tsarevitch's whole life, the moral bonds between him and all ranks of the army and navy, from the commanders to the soldiers and seamen"![1]

On August 25th the first Japanese army, under Kuroki, attacked the Russians, who were "strongly posted on steep mountain ridges twenty-three miles south-east of Liao-Yang." They continued the assault during the night, and carried the enemy's position after an infantry bayonet charge. "Next day," says the Japanese report, "severe fighting was resumed, but the enemy's resistance remained unabated." Once again the Japanese continued the fighting all through the night, a proceeding which must have inflicted untold agony on the soft and stupid Russians. "That night," says Oyama's report, "our right column, after a sanguinary engagement, carried the enemy's left and captured eight guns. Next morning our whole column resumed attack, and at sunset the entire line of the enemy's position fell into our hands. Our casualties were about 2,000."

General Kuroki's army from the east had now joined hands with General Nodzu's army from the south, otherwise the army of Takushen, and with General Oku's army from the west, and all three constituted one effective force under the supreme command of Marshal Oyama.

It will not have been forgotten how the Russians,

[1] *Official Messenger*, August 26, 1904.

having retreated from Haicheng before the advance of General Oku, had taken up a position on the Anshanchan road. General Oku's army now advanced and attacked them. The Russians retreated to Anshanchan. The Japanese followed them, and the Russians retired from that station without resistance. "Our armies pursued the enemy," says the Japanese despatch, "while our detachments intercepted him, and he thereupon fled towards Liao-Yang in utter confusion, apparently suffering considerable damage from our fire." That was how the christening of the Tsarevitch was celebrated in Manchuria.

In his report upon this fight Sakharoff says, in the usual Russian style: "Yesterday the troops retired slowly on Anshanchan." And two days later he added that the Russians had retreated "in an orderly manner from Anshanchan." All the disagreeable reports, at this period of defeat, were signed by Sakharoff, Kuropatkin holding his signature in reserve for the long-delayed victory which was to take place at Liao-Yang.

The Japanese gave the Russians no rest; they continued their attack on August 28th and 29th, under the command of Kuroki and Nodzu, and pressed the Muscovites back into Liao-Yang on every side.

The Russian reports are all couched in the same strain. "On our right flank," says General Sakharoff, "our troops retired from the advanced positions which hindered the action of the artillery, and passed on to the main position. The fight in the eastern direction was a serious affair, and came to a bayonet encounter." It appears, then, that matters had at length become "serious" for the Russians. The "Banzais" of the Japanese, chasing them at the bayonet's point, had driven terror into the ill-treated and superstitious moujiks.

On the 29th of August the Japanese began to attack the Russians immediately before Liao-Yang, and now or never Kuropatkin, the strategist, would have to fight. "The Japanese are delivering an obstinate attack against our centre," he telegraphs, "and at nine o'clock this morning they were in close proximity to our advance guard."

The long-postponed battle of Liao-Yang may be said to have begun at five o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, August 30, 1904. Apart from the greater issues at stake, Liao-Yang in itself was a city worth fighting for, being described as "the richest town in Manchuria, the chief emporium of local supplies and foodstuffs, and the principal strategic base." It was said that the total forces engaged on both sides amounted to 500,000 men and 1,350 guns.

General Sakharoff says: "The Japanese attacked from five in the morning until nine in the evening our advanced positions at Liao-Yang on the Taitse River. The artillery and rifle fire at one time was of an extremely violent character." At numerous points during the day the Japanese crossed bayonets with the Russians; and towards four o'clock in the afternoon the Japanese made an offensive movement with the object of turning the Russian right flank, the turning movement being arrested after a hot fight.

At this stage of the battle telegrams began to appear in the Russian papers to the effect that the Russians were going to win. Accounts of Japanese prisoners arriving at Mukden and of Japanese guns having been captured were published in the Continental press, while no corresponding details were to be had from the Japanese side. Stories were also circulated of Russian victories at Port Arthur, which were retailed to the credulous troopers of Kuropatkin's army at Liao-Yang. "The communications made to all the

troops, even to the lines of the advanced guards," says General Sakharoff, "of the official news of August 26th, that the heroic garrison of Port Arthur had repulsed all the Japanese attacks, was received with rejoicing, and still more raised the spirit of the troops, inspiring them with a desire to follow the example of their comrades." Poor Russian soldiers, they had little reason to be in good spirits, whether on the battlefield in Manchuria, or at home in the silent, gloomy plains of dreary Russia! They did not know what they were fighting for. They only knew that they were being exploited, like so many dumb beasts, by designing men who lived in luxury on the labour of illiterate Russian peasants. Nicholas set his seal to this pretence of success at Port Arthur, thereby hoping to infuse more Dutch courage into his slaves, by an order on August 30th, while the fortunes of his army were trembling in the balance at Liao-Yang, in which he conferred on General Stoessel the Cross of St. George, of the Third Class, for bravery!

On August 29th, accompanied by the Grand Dukes Michael Alexandrovitch and Nicholas Nikolaievitch, the Tsar reviewed the fourth division of the Don Cossack army outside St. Petersburg, *en route* for Manchuria, and "wished the troops God-speed, and *gave them his blessing*."

From August 30th to September 4th the Japanese maintained their assault upon the Russians at Liao-Yang. They were engaged in what will prove to be one of the most decisive battles in the world's history. The combatant forces were the awakened intellect of the Ancient East and the drugged intellect of the Modern West; and furthermore it was an unprecedented conflict between human intelligence on the one hand, acting on a basis of natural virtue and industry, without any pretensions to supernatural

assistance, and on the other hand an organised system of superstition and falsehood, pretending to a partnership with Divine Omnipotence, resting on a basis of bestial illiteracy, and having for its object the enrichment of a small ruling clique and their parasites. The Japanese fired straight and lived virtuously. The Russians, from Nicholas himself down to the lowest private in the ranks, though they called upon God and worshipped their ikons at every possible pretext, had scant acquaintance with that true form of Christianity which includes the manly virtues of abstemiousness, courage, and self-sacrifice.

On August 29th the right and central columns of the Japanese First Army were posted nine miles east-south-east of Liao-Yang on the southern bank of the Taitse River. The Japanese army advancing from the west, on the same day took up a position facing the enemy's line of defence, which now extended "east and west from a point six miles south of Liao-Yang." Fierce fighting continued all day on Tuesday, August 30th, and up till the afternoon of Wednesday, August 31st, when a respite occurred. At 8 p.m. the battle commenced again and lasted until midnight—"a desperate battle," Sakharoff calls it. Some of the Russian advanced fortifications passed into the hands of the Japanese. "They were, however, each time recaptured by us at the point of the bayonet," says Sakharoff, "and the Japanese left a number of dead after each bayonet engagement." The fields where the fight was raging were millet-fields in which the crops were ripening for the harvest. "Our troops," says the Russian general, "found time to dig pits in the *kaoliang* fields in front of some of our positions. They were completely filled by Japanese corpses." Sakharoff said, "The enemy's losses must be enormous." But, he added, "ours have not yet been even approximately computed. They are also considerable."

"The night of August 31st," says Sakharoff, "passed quietly, neither the enemy nor the Russians having fired up to six o'clock in the morning." The Japanese were active at daybreak. At 5 a.m. Sakharoff learned that "a division of Japanese infantry, with artillery and cavalry, had crossed a ford of the River Taitse, and Kuroki's army was threatening the Russian rear." All the fighting, so far, had been on the south side of the river, but a portion of the town of Liao-Yang lay on the north bank of the stream. General Oku on the west was awake very early also on Thursday, September 1st, and, in the cool of the morning, "by a fierce and daring assault," took possession of the highlands commanding Liao-Yang.

The main body of the Russians then commenced to retreat, and the Japanese left and centre armies, under Oku and Nodzu, pursued them vigorously. The outposts of Liao-Yang were carried. "The enemy, being unable to resist our fierce attack," says Marshal Oyama, "began retiring towards Liao-Yang." The Russians were everywhere retreating in great confusion across the River Taitse, and pouring into the town of Liao-Yang. "Our left and centre," says the Japanese Marshal, "are hotly pursuing the enemy, who in great confusion are trying to retire to the right bank of the Taitse. We captured ten cannons, and they are being used to bombard the Liao-Yang railway station." On the same day the Japanese, under Kuroki, were attacking the enemy at a point fifteen miles north-east of Liao-Yang, apparently with the object of cutting off their retreat by turning their left flank. During the three days which the battle had now lasted, from August 29th to September 1st, Marshal Oyama estimated his own casualties at about 10,000.

All through the Thursday, September 1st, there was ceaseless fighting, and the Russians continued to

retreat behind the Taitse River. Then Kuropatkin received the alarming intelligence that Kuroki, who had crossed the Taitse, had driven back the Russian left and was marching down on Liao-Yang. Thereupon the Russians shifted back along the railway and established a new railway station further north.

The Japanese had attacked the Russians at the post called Sykwantun and were repulsed. "They renewed their attack at night," says Kuropatkin, "this time with success, driving back a regiment in the direction of Sa-ku-tun. The retreat of this regiment led to the evacuation of positions held by other troops." The retreat from Liao-Yang had already commenced. Kuroki commanded the town on the east and Oku dominated it on the west.

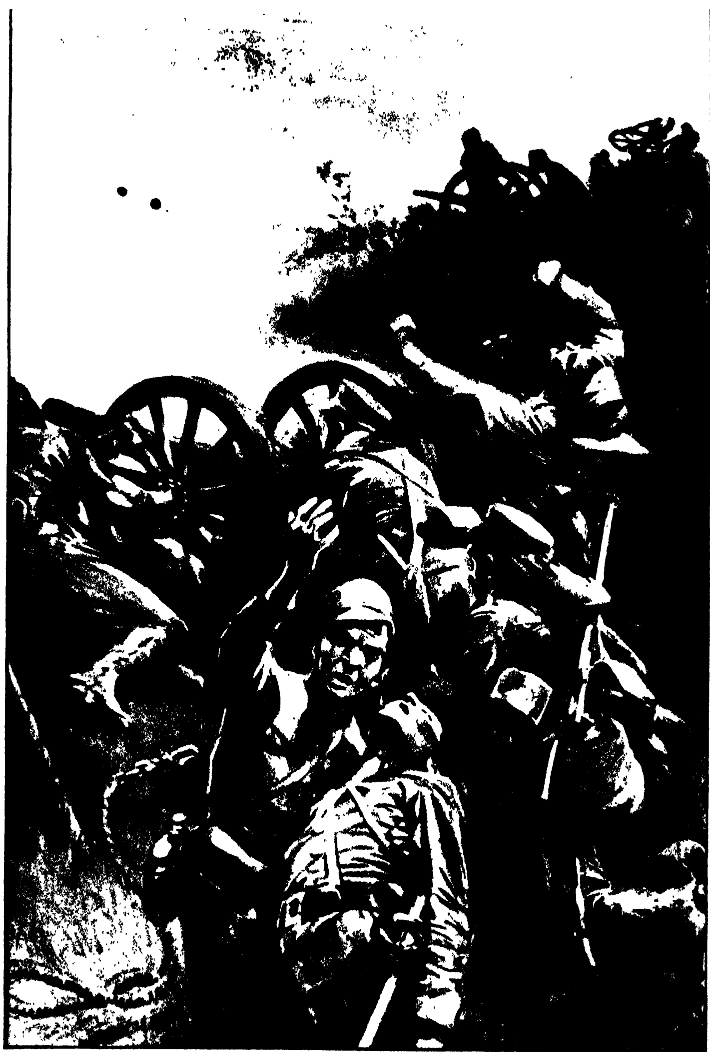
The sun rose on Friday, September 2nd. "At dawn to-day," says Kuropatkin in his despatch to the Tsar, "I assumed the offensive against the troops of General Kuroki. At midday the bands of the attacking corps were in line." At last the profound strategist was ready! His scheme was an ambitious one, Kuroki being merely a detail in it: "Preparations are being made to retake by means of artillery the positions captured during the night by the Japanese, and the infantry is also advancing to the attack."

Then he proceeds to brazen out his continuous defeats on the preceding day, writing in his tent, doubtless, while Kuroki was turning his "offensive" operations into an ignominious rout! "During the night," says the strategist, "the Japanese violently bombarded the interior of the Russian position in the town of Liao-Yang, and the railway station and the railway itself. Our losses are insignificant." Every defeat was more "insignificant" than the last, according to Kuropatkin. "I have just received a despatch," he goes on, "from the chief of the Liao-

Yang garrison, timed 10.35 a.m., to the effect that the Japanese have attacked the fort situated in the centre of the position, but that they were repulsed with very great loss. We had six men killed in the fort." It is almost impossible for a civilised British mind to realise the mental condition of a general who, while death, disgrace, and defeat were rampant all around him, while thousands of his men were dead or dying, could thus in a spirit of bravado report the loss of "six men"! Or, did the Russian War Office intend this to be a set-off against the defeat recorded in the same despatch?

Sakharoff's account of the fighting on this fatal Friday is more satisfying than Kuropatkin's. "To-day, the 2nd inst., our troops assaulted the heights of Sykwantun. After a desperate fight we captured the whole chain of mountains west of Sykwantun, but we immediately made the discovery that we had to deal with a strong Japanese force with a front extending from the Yentai mines to the River Taitse." General Orloff's division had to retire with its commander wounded. For a time the advance of the Japanese was checked by the First Siberian Army Corps under General Stackelberg; and at nine o'clock in the evening "there was a lull in the fighting all along the line." But Sakharoff could hear the guns booming behind him in the town of Liao-Yang itself, which the Japanese had been attacking all the day. Sakharoff says he estimated his own killed and wounded that day at 3,000.

"At quarter to four," says Sakharoff, "the first Japanese shell fell into Liao-Yang, and was followed by a hail of projectiles which swept the railway station, the suburbs, and the town itself. Fortunately the railway station was empty, all the rolling stock having been removed." Kuropatkin had seen to that. "The



KUROKI'S ARTILLERY AT THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG.

"Kuroki had beaten back Kuropatkin's offensive movement and threatened the Russian rear." p. 239.

[*Face p.* 260.

first persons wounded were a sister of charity (!), a doctor, and several Chinese, as well as a non-commissioned officer of the transport service." How dastardly of the Japanese gunners! At five o'clock the town of Liao-Yang was enveloped in flames, and Sakharoff had his last sight of it. He closes his report by saying: "The booming of the guns followed our train as it carried off the wounded."

On Saturday morning, September 3rd, Kuropatkin's despatch was written in language more suitable to a defeated general than his report of the preceding day: "Last night the enemy attacked and seized most of the positions occupied by our troops at Sykwantun. Those of our troops who held these positions retired on the position held by the rear-guard between the village of Shan-sun-tun and Shitshanza. During the night, also, the first Siberian Army Corps, which had sustained heavy losses during the last five days, and which was in danger of having its flank turned by the enemy's superior forces, retired several kilometres towards the west." Kuroki had beaten back Kuropatkin's offensive movement and threatened the Russian rear!

"In these circumstances," writes Kuropatkin, without a word of further self-justification, "I order Liao-Yang to be evacuated and the troops to retire northward."

On that eventful Saturday Marshal Oyama telegraphed to the Mikado that "at 9 a.m. the remnant of the routed enemy was still offering some resistance outside Liao-Yang," and that the Japanese central and left armies were attacking him.

As we have not hitherto given an extract from any of General Nodzu's reports, his description of the work done by the central Japanese army on this memorable Saturday deserves quotation: "From 5 a.m. on September 3rd, the army, continuing the

previous day's fight, attacked the enemy's positions south of Liao-Yang. The Russian fire was undiminished, but, as the gun ammunition of the right column was failing, and there was no prospect of a fresh supply, it seemed better to push home the attack than to suffer useless losses by remaining within close range of fifty guns."

Nodzu's men had been fighting all day, from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m., when the ammunition ran short. He now ordered his right and left columns to make a combined charge on the forts of Yu-fan-miao. In their advance the columns "had to cross a zone of heavy fire from guns and small arms."

"As they approached the fort subsidiary obstacles were encountered"—including the pits dug in the millet-fields—"which had to be removed, and the men had to pass over heaps of their own dead and wounded." It was ten minutes to eight p.m. before his leading regiment on the right captured a fort. His left column captured another fort under cover of darkness. At twenty minutes past ten p.m. he had captured the south gate of the city, and one of his columns bivouacked there for the night.

He narrates the loss of officers suffered by one of his regiments, the Twentieth, which "had lost its commander and battalion commander in the fight at Anshanchan, afterwards lost two battalion commanders at the battle of Weijago, and again on September 2nd lost the colonel commanding and two new battalion commanders. Thus there was not a single field officer left, and Major-General Marui took command." In the battle on September 3rd "its leading line was almost swept away," but "the whole regiment charged furiously, tore away all obstacles, and carried the forts, cheering for the Emperor. One battalion lost every officer, the com-

mand of the companies being assumed by first-class privates; one company was reduced to fourteen or fifteen men, and the regiment's total casualties were 1,200 to 1,300. Nevertheless on September 4th it sent out a pursuing force."

On Sunday, September 4th, at 1.30 p.m., Marshal Oyama reported that Liao-Yang had fallen entirely into his hands. "At 12.30 p.m.," says Nodzu, "the whole line rushed the forts and pursuing the garrison, occupied the northern portion of the town."

Kuropatkin's plans were shattered. His defeated army was now struggling from Liao-Yang to Mukden, a distance of fifty miles, hotly pursued by General Kuroki, after having suffered losses which were estimated at a minimum of 20,000. Kuropatkin's report of the retreat is monotonous. It was nothing more than another day's work to the strategist. "The retreat of our troops from Liao-Yang on the right bank of the Taitse River, on the night of September 4th, was carried out in good order." Then follows a snarl: "The enemy's insignificant attempts at pursuit were stopped by our rear-guard."

His account of the Russian flight on the following day is quite different. The enemy's "attempts at pursuit" are no longer "insignificant." "To-day, September 5th," he writes, "the army advancing north extricated itself from the dangerous situation in which it found itself, being threatened by the enemy and having a narrow front. The enemy throughout the day cannonaded the rear-guards of our front and left flank columns, especially the latter, but without much effect."

He was safe! His baggage and artillery was already arriving at Mukden, and some of the convoys were actually pressing through that place and going further north! The Russian Press Censorship, that

important body charged by Nicholas with the sacred duty of interpreting the thoughts and feelings of the Russian people, and ensuring that the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about the war should be transmitted to Russia, was removed from Mukden to Harbin.

Alexieff is said to have come out to meet Kuropatkin at Yentai, some twenty miles north of Liao-Yang and thirty miles south of Mukden; and the *par nobile fratrum* held a consultation, at which "grave decisions were taken" as to the positions south of Mukden which should be fortified with a view of making another stand.

On September 5th Generals Terauchi and Fukushima gave a banquet at Tokio in honour of the great victory at Liao-Yang, at which the Imperial Princes, Ministers, Elder Statesmen, and heads of departments were present.

On September 6th Kuropatkin took up his quarters at Mukden.

The battle of Liao-Yang was fought under distressing meteorological conditions. Torrential rain fell which made the ground and rivers impassable except at great loss of life. Heavy storms of thunder and lightning raged, varied by periods of intense heat and sultriness. The Japanese accounts do not lay stress upon these collateral circumstances, but the Russians and other Continental newspaper correspondents expend reams of paper in describing them.

Several days elapsed before the casualties on both sides were accurately reckoned and the results of the battle correctly appraised.

On September 11th it was officially announced that the total Japanese casualties at the battle of Liao-Yang from August 26th to September 4th were 136 officers killed and 464 wounded, while the dead and wounded

men amounted to 16,939; total 17,539. Oku's brave army on the left,[1] which had cut off Port Arthur at Kinchau on May 26th, and had been fighting its way along the railway line since that date, stage by stage, had suffered most heavily, having lost 7,681. Nodzu's central army had lost 4,992, and the dashing Kuroki, on the right, who had completed the rout of the Russians, had lost 4,886.

On the same day Kuropatkin sent his report to the Tsar, estimating his total losses at 17,000 officers and men, of whom 4,000 were killed. He also announced that in his hurried departure from Liao-Yang "there was no time to save the commissariat reserve, which was sufficient to last the whole army for eight days. These were all destroyed. The pontoon bridges were dismantled and carried off by the troops, while the temporary pontoons were burned. The railway bridge was wrecked."

In such work of destruction the Russians were, so to speak, in their native element. Then he goes on to say, as if from sheer force of habit, for it contradicts his preceding statements, "The army retired in perfect order." He had got away his artillery, transport, and baggage, and on September 7th was reposing comfortably in Mukden. On September 8th, 9th, and 10th he telegraphed to say, "There were no hostilities except insignificant encounters between patrols in which we sustained no casualties."

It was now stated publicly that Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, "had placed his resignation in the hands of the Tsar," and the rumour, as we shall see, turned out to be a prelude to his actual recall.

[1] An eloquent and graphic account of his personal experiences with Oku's army during the battle of Liao-Yang was despatched from Shanhaikwan by *The Times'* special correspondent a few days after the Japanese victory—an event which was described as "the first real journalistic triumph of the war."

CHAPTER XVII

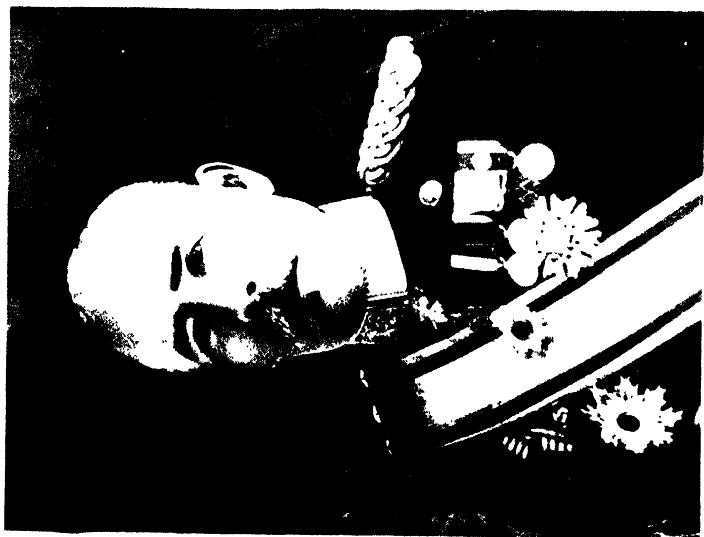
General Kuroki and his men—Japanese virtues—The Tsar inspects the Baltic Fleet—The Fleet sets sail from Libau—Alexieff and Stoessel—Siege of Port Arthur—General Gripenberg appointed to command Second Manchurian Army—Kuropatkin's Proclamation.

SIR IAN HAMILTON, the British *attaché*, was constantly with General Kuroki during the battle of Liao-Yang, and was said to have been accorded privileges greater than those enjoyed by any foreign *attaché* in previous wars.

A shrewd eye-witness who was with Kuroki's army says: "General Kuroki is a quiet and unassuming gentleman, rather of the Moltke type."[1] The army partook of the General's character, and might be described as the "silent army." While the Russians had their regimental bands to play in camp at sunset, on the march, or during battle, and while the Russian troopers roared their patriotic choruses round the bivouac fires, in the Japanese camp all was silence and seriousness, or temperate gaiety. "I have never heard the sound of a trumpet near the front," says our authority. Not even war-songs were sung. The enthusiasm of the Japanese was displayed only in moments of triumph, when their "wild and stirring cheer, 'Banzai'!" was heard as they charged to victory. "The camp-followers, instead of intoxicating liquors, sold handkerchiefs, cigarettes, soap, tooth-brushes, writing

[1] Reuter's correspondent.





paper, and envelopes. There was no beer. "Tea, fans, and cigarettes are the soldiers' luxuries; fishing, writing letters, and reading newspapers their amusements." The same accurate observer says truly, "The Japanese generals do not play to the gallery at all." It appears the press censors used to forbid the newspaper correspondents to mention the names of the commanders in successful engagements.

In England such a man as Kuroki would have been a hero; in America a popular idol. In Japan he was an ordinary citizen, doing his duty to the best of his ability. All the other generals did their work as well as Kuroki. In no respect did he excel Nodzu, Oku, or Nogi. Kuroki made a dashing march and drove the Russians out of Korea. After Oku and Nodzu commenced operations, Kuroki had fewer Russian troops opposed to him. Oku did the heaviest fighting on the left; Nodzu, when his time came before Liao-Yang, struck in with as much success as either of them; and while they were all three battering the Russians at Liao-Yang, Nogi was extinguishing Stoessel's resistance at Port Arthur. Where all are equally good, there is no room for that hysterical adulation which has constituted such a feature of battle literature in Europe from time immemorial. We have been taught to be always on the look-out for some military demigod before whom to offer up incense when a war breaks out; and this frame of mind prevents us from managing our wars on business principles. Every soldier is a hero; every commander is a genius—until after the war.

Of the Japanese soldier, we are told, "no description would be just which failed to mention his courtesy and his honesty." Luxuries of various kinds, which would be stolen by the soldiers of any other army, might be safely left unguarded in Kuroki's camp "without fear for the safety of them." "Nothing is stolen, not even

tobacco or food." It is not a tyrannous discipline which produces this admirable result; "it seems rather that pride in the uniform they wear and innate courtesy is the explanation." It appears that certain newly-arrived foreigners with Kuroki's army had offered money to the soldiers in return for services rendered, but, says the correspondent, "they will not be apt to repeat the mistake."

This pleasing picture of Kuroki's army corresponds in every particular with an account given by Dr. Dresser of a tour in Japan thirty years ago, the first book upon the Island Empire of the Far East which the writer of this history ever read, and which he remembers with unfeigned delight after an interval of twenty years. The conception of vice or wrong seems impossible to the Japanese intellect in its native condition. Those natural acts, which, in Western countries, have been surrounded with complex conventional rules tending to manufacture vice where there should be only virtue, constitute no incentive to brutality to the Japanese mind.

I remember descriptions of the long journeys made in a jinrikisha through the interior of the country at a time when it was less known than it is now. The Japanese chairmen who had borne the traveller over hill and dale for a distance of thirty or forty miles under the hot sun, with no nourishment other than a few wild birds' eggs and a few grains of rice, would be found in the evening bathing themselves in the public bath with the villagers; the men and women, boys and girls, performing their ablutions indiscriminately, harbouring no evil thoughts and joyous as the birds. The endurance of the Japanese is little short of miraculous, considering their slight frames and the small amount of nourishment they consume.

The accounts now given of the Japanese soldiers

proved that, although European inventions have been adopted in Japan, the character of the Japanese fortunately has remained untarnished, as yet; and they are still the happy children that they were from time immemorial, believing in the future of Japan, prepared to live gaily while on earth, but entertaining no fear of departing to the companionship of the spirits of their dead friends whenever it may be their lot to die. Their great moral qualities have been smiled at by the wiseacres of Europe; but now, when brought into play against a nation which has long called itself one of the great European Powers, the Japanese virtues have proved more powerful than priestly ritual, brute strength, gluttonous appetite, or the boisterous hilarity begotten of artificial stimulants.

While tales of desertion from the Russian army in Manchuria were circulating now on every side, there was no possibility of such a disgraceful imputation attaching itself to the soldiers of Japan. While stories were rife of Russian regiments being commanded by privates during the battle, in consequence of the officers being drunk, or engaged in amusement, or suffering from cowardice, the Japanese regiments were never commanded by privates, except when their officers had all been slain in the foremost of the fight.

But, although the Russian generals were unable to win victories over the Japanese in Manchuria, the resources of the Russian autocracy were not as yet exhausted. The Baltic Fleet was still left. And, moreover, Nicholas himself could do wonders in the way of ceremonials at St. Petersburg, which, when set up in print, would look highly imposing, might go far to impress Europe and help the flotation of Russian loans in France.

On Saturday, September 3rd, the day that Kuropatkin was driven out of Liao-Yang, Nicholas issued an order

conferring promotion on five Russian generals in the Far East—Linievitch, Alexieff (not the Viceroy), Rennenkampf, Gerrgross, and Fock—"for distinguished conduct in face of the enemy." A sixth general, Mistchenko, was presented with a gold sword set with brilliants. That was the "lie in fact" which constituted for the poor Russian people the official account of the defeat at Liao-Yang. And there were thousands of "lies in word" disseminated broadcast in addition, under the auspices of the Chief Department for Press Affairs. The *Novoe Vremya* told the poor Russians that Liao-Yang was a second Borodino. Kuropatkin had retired "with majestic calm" and had won "a magnificent victory." The *Journal de St. Petersburg* said that, after Liao-Yang, the Russian army "had a right to consider itself invincible."

Nicholas was hysterically active in those days. Although an Imperial armoured train had been prepared, he had not gone to the front in August, having found work of a more congenial nature at home. On Monday, September 5th, while Kuropatkin was racing for Mukden, hurrying his supplies and his artillery before him in confusion, Nicholas, in order to distract the attention of his own people and of Europe in general, proceeded publicly to Kronstadt, accompanied by the Dowager-Empress, the Grand Dukes Michael Alexandrovitch, Alexis Alexandrovitch, Alexander Mikhailovitch, and the Grand Duchess Xenia. In face of such a demonstration it would be impossible for any one to say that the Russian autocracy was in danger. The Dowager-Empress, it appears, is a power behind the throne in Russia as well as in China.

The Imperial party paid a visit to the cruiser *Oleg*, 6,800 tons, 20,000 horse-power, with a speed of 23 knots, and were afterwards conveyed in Imperial launches to the battleship *Orel*, built in 1901, 13,400

tons, 16,300 horse-power, with a speed of 18 knots. From the *Orel* the august demonstration proceeded on board the royal yacht, and "his Majesty reviewed the warships lying in the roads." The great battleships outside were six in number—the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, flagship, from whose masthead flew the flag of Admiral Roshdestvensky, who was going to the Far East to replace the dead Admirals Makaroff and Vitoft. Roshdestvensky was now being depicted daily as a greater hero than ever Makaroff had been supposed to be in the days before that unlucky man went to war. The *Kniaz Suvaroff* is a splendid ship, built in 1902, 13,100 tons displacement, 16,300 indicated horse-power, and with a speed of 18 knots. In line beside her lay the *Borodino* and *Alexander III.*, sister battleships, built in 1901, 13,400 tons displacement, 16,300 horse-power, and with a speed of 18 knots; also the *Navarin*, built about 1893, 10,000 tons displacement, 9,000 indicated horse-power, with a speed of 16 knots; the *Sissoi Veliky*, built in 1894, 8,800 tons displacement, 8,500 horse-power, and having a speed of 16 knots; and the *Oslyabya*, built in 1898, 12,674 tons displacement, 14,500 indicated horse-power, and with a speed of 18 knots. Besides the battleships there were the cruisers *Svietlana*, *Aurora*, *Dmitri Donskoi*, *Almaz*, and *Admiral Nachimoff*.

Nicholas and the Imperial party inspected the fleet, as if they were experts capable of discovering the minutest flaw in the equipment of the ships, or in the *personnel* of their crews. The squadron made an impressive sight, and, if it were under capable direction, might have done much to retrieve the character and fortunes of Russia. It was not as great an array of warships as the Port Arthur Fleet which had just been destroyed, dispersed, and imprisoned. But it was a martial asset of the highest value, if only the Russians

were prepared to do some manly fighting, and abjure cowardly looting and piracy on the high seas; if only Nicholas would forswear his dishonest habit of smuggling warships through the Dardanelles and Suez Canal under a merchant flag, hoisting the battle flag at their masthead in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and making war upon mail steamers and neutral merchantmen.

But Russia cannot cease to be herself. It must not be forgotten that, in her *rôle* of civilised European state, she is, at best, only keeping up appearances. If one probes beneath the skin one straightway discovers the Tartar; or, to put it otherwise, if one removes the lion-skin in which the Romanoffs have draped her, one discovers that the Russian ass, whose bray has been terrifying us, is a very sorry animal indeed.

It was announced on September 11th that the Baltic Fleet had sailed from Kronstadt that day, at 2 p.m., bound for the Far East, under Rear-Admiral Roshdestvensky. But the statement was untrue, like so much other Russian official intelligence. The Russians were in constant terror of Japanese spies. A fortnight elapsed, and the fleet had not yet left the Baltic. Its doings were not clearly known, but the French newspapers vouched for its sailing before October 7th.

But it was not until October 11th that the squadron, consisting of the battleships and cruisers before-mentioned, along with a number of torpedo destroyers and transports, left Reval for Libau, a distance of 250 miles, being the second stage of its voyage for the relief of Stoessel and Port Arthur. German colliers were loading up with immense cargoes of Welsh coal at Barry, and at highly remunerative prices. As this coal was ordered in the name of German commercial firms the Welsh companies had no option but to supply it; and in this way the voyage of Roshdest-

vensky resulted in a revival of prosperity accompanied by considerable gain for the Principality.

The Baltic Fleet left Libau on the morning of October 15th, and passed the island of Bornholm in two divisions. On the 18th it was in the Great Belt, off Langeland Island, and was proceeding northwards through the Kattegat.

While the fleet was lying-to off Langeland, the Danish fishermen remarked the nervous cowardice of the Russian officers and seamen. They seemed afraid of their shadows. A telegram from the Tsar arrived for Roshdestvensky at the address of the Russian Consul at Rudkjobing, in the island of Langeland. The Consul manned his motor-launch with two fishermen and sent them off to the flagship with the telegram. When they approached the *Kniaz Suvaroff* with their message, searchlights were focussed upon them which almost blinded the unsophisticated islanders. Shots were fired at them which were said to have been blank charges. But, in view of subsequent occurrences, it is possible the charges may not have been so harmless, but only may have providentially missed their mark. The launch was stopped, and would not be allowed to approach the battleship. A boat was lowered and pulled out to meet the fishermen, from whom the Imperial message was then taken.

It was reported that the battleship *Orel* had run into a sandbank shortly after leaving Kronstadt, and that she had to put back for repairs, and that the port commandant had officially reprimanded the commanders of warships in the vicinity for not having rendered assistance.

It was also stated, and the event proved it to be true, that an understanding had been arrived at between the Emperors of Germany and Russia by which German colliers were to be stationed at pre-

arranged ports all along the route from the Baltic to the Yellow Sea for the supply of Roshdestvensky's fleet. It was added that nobody but the two Emperors knew where these coal-vessels were to be stationed, which is also probably not far from the truth. Russia maintained that coal was contraband of war, yet no measures were taken to prevent Germany from thus supplying munitions of war to the Russian fleet on its way out to crush Japan. The only European Power with the will to do so was Great Britain, and we did not see our way to interfere with such good business for Germany. Lord Lansdowne informed a British house which had asked his opinion, that it was not lawful to supply coal to Russian warships, and the contract which the firm had in view was undertaken by a German company.

On September 14th the Tsar had published messages from General Stoessel announcing victories gained on August 27th and the following days over General Nogi's besieging army. As usual, the Russian losses were "insignificant." No word occurs more prominently in the Russian despatches than this adjective "insignificant" as applied to the loss of human life. The Russian commanders, it appears, do not set much value on the life of a private soldier. A story is told [1] how, when a corporal reported to a battery-commander that a horse had fallen and crushed its rider, the commander exclaimed: "Well, never mind about the rider. If one is killed, we will send out two more; but the horse, take care that it is properly attended to. You can't get a horse for nothing; the horse was paid for. You may go."

Alexieff also sent a telegram to the Tsar on September 14th, containing a message from General Stoessel dated August 31st. The Japanese were

[1] *The Daily News*, February 11, 1905.

fortifying fresh positions near Port Arthur, and issuing proclamations calling on the Russian troops to surrender. But, says Alexieff, "General Stoessel sees in these proclamations an indication of the enemy's consciousness of failure."

Just as Liao-Yang had been "a magnificent victory" for the Russians, so the encompassment of Port Arthur was another triumph of Russian strategy. Stoessel had not been able to get his message, dated August 31st, into Alexieff's hands until September 14th, yet he would convince the world that the Japanese were checkmated. But if Alexieff and Stoessel had no victory to record, they had fulsome flattery in abundance for Nicholas: "The garrison received with indescribable enthusiasm the news of the birth of the Tsarevitch Alexis," says the Viceroy of the Far East, "and sees in the appointment of General Stoessel as Aide-de-camp-General, and of Colonel Semenoff as aide-de-camp to the Emperor, a token of the Sovereign's good-will towards the defenders of the fortress." It seemed to be Alexieff's cue to bring forward Stoessel, now that Kuropatkin, the Viceroy's rival, was in the shade after the reverse at Liao-Yang.

General Nogi and Admiral Togo, in the discharge of their duty, combined to harass the vainglorious Stoessel. On Thursday, September 1st, while Oku, Nodzu, and Kuroki were fighting at Liao-Yang, the Japanese bombarded the two hills known as High Mountain and Long Mountain. The Russian losses were, of course, "insignificant." On September 3rd the enemy fired 250 shells at Port Arthur; and Stoessel tells how Togo's squadron remained in view of the fortress all through the operation. On September 10th Stoessel got another message out in which he reported that the Japanese were "daily bombarding the forts and batteries inside of the fortress, but without showing

any great activity." Stoessel was now in high spirits with the Imperial honours still fresh upon him: "The wounded are recovering and gradually resume their places in the ranks," he writes. "They are heroes. The troops are in excellent spirits." On September 16th he repulsed the Japanese twice, the enemy's force being "at least one battalion"! But it was asserted a week afterwards that, on the night of the 15th–16th, he had lost over forty guns and over 1,000 men killed and wounded.

On that eventful night some distinguished Russians who were inside Port Arthur showed their want of confidence in Stoessel by escaping from the fortress. These were Prince Radziwill and another Russian officer, two civilians, and the wife of a Russian staff officer, who ran the blockade in a Chinese junk and landed secretly at Chifu. The fugitives gave a rose-coloured account of the condition of things in Port Arthur. Stoessel himself was described as being in "the best of spirits," while as for Madame Stoessel, the soldiers considered her "their guardian angel." "The garrison maintains a strong and devoted martial spirit, having great confidence in the General, who is cheered when riding along the line." Almost in the same breath Prince Radziwill adds that the *Novy Krai*, the local newspaper of Port Arthur, "had been suppressed for a period of one month for having published matter considered detrimental to the Russian interests"!

At the same moment at Mukden, Kuropatkin was engaged in banishing the correspondents of Russian newspapers, "owing to the nature of their recent communications to their journals." What a perverse tribe these Russian journalists must be! Here are Nicholas and Kuropatkin and Stoessel all wanting them to express the true thoughts and feelings of the Russian people, to tell "the truth, and nothing but the truth," about the war, and yet they will not act on

that noble programme! But before condemning the journals, one would like to have Nicholas's answer to the question, What is truth?

Radziwill had some stories to tell of individual acts of heroism. A company stationed at a perilous post sent word to General Stoessel: "We are unable to hold the positions."

"But you can die," the General replied.

"And so they died!" said Radziwill triumphantly.

If they had been horses, which had been paid for, Stoessel, in all probability, would have taken some measures to save them.

If Stoessel had gone to the assistance of that company and died with them he would have done a heroic service to Russia.

A Danish resident in Port Arthur wrote a letter to a friend at this time in which he said that those confined in Port Arthur had been looking forward, during July and August, to the arrival of the Baltic Fleet at the beginning of October.

On September 23rd General Stoessel again managed to send a message to the Tsar: "I have the pleasure of reporting to your Majesty," he said, "that the Japanese assaults, lasting four days, were repulsed by our heroic troops with enormous loss to the enemy." The enemy's losses were always "enormous" with Stoessel, and in this message he seriously states "the Japanese lost over 10,000 men"—an assertion which was of course utterly unfounded. The Japanese rarely took the trouble of contradicting Stoessel's wild assertions. On this occasion "the Japanese fled panic-stricken." The cause of their panic was briefly that "Lieutenant Podgorsky had been despatched by General Kondrachenko, and, under the direction of Colonel Irmann, had hurled grenades filled with pyroxiline into the works held by the Japanese. These exploded

among the enemy, who fled in panic," and Captain Sutcheff had "pursued the flying foe with Chasseurs"!

The inevitable anti-climax was supplied in the statement which immediately followed, that two field-redoubts remained in the hands of the Japanese, who had also destroyed the reservoirs containing the water-supply of Port Arthur, and that the besiegers "were working actively now and were gradually drawing nearer." The Tsar must have had considerable difficulty in arriving at the truth. Were the Japanese flying away panic-stricken, or were they drawing nearer?

The Russians were now beginning to show themselves in their winter uniforms outside Mukden to the Japanese vanguard which was situated halfway between Liao-Yang and that place. The millet crop had now been harvested and the country was clear for military operations. On September 17th two bodies of Russians attacked the Japanese at Ping-Taitse, the Russian force consisting of five battalions of infantry, eight squadrons of cavalry, and fourteen guns. Marshal Oyama says "they were finally repulsed at 7 p.m.," the engagement having lasted for seven hours. Kuropatkin's description of this engagement was that it was a *reconnaissance* on an important scale conducted by Generals Rennenkampf and Samsonoff. It is noticeable that he does not employ the word "insignificant" in connection with it. He says that the *reconnaissance* "resulted in heavy fighting attended with many casualties," and that he discovered from it that the Japanese had further increased their forces in his immediate vicinity. On September 19th and 20th the Japanese made an offensive movement against the Russians, but Kuropatkin says that both the attacks were repulsed.

Kuropatkin had apparently grown more conscious of the importance of trifles. Some personal conse-

quences had followed from the "magnificent victory" of Liao-Yang which were calculated to disturb "the majestic calm" of the strategist. General Orloff was deprived of his command and recalled, in consequence of his action at Liao-Yang. But, more important still, General Gripenberg was appointed to the command of the Second Manchurian Army, and the Tsar wrote an autograph letter direct to Gripenberg, in which he said: "I have found it necessary to divide the troops for active service in Manchuria into two armies." The meaning of which was that Kuropatkin was virtually removed from the position of Commander-in-Chief, and was henceforth to occupy a co-ordinate position with the new General.

The Tsar went on to say: "While leaving the command of one of these armies in the hands of General Kuropatkin, I appoint you to command the second. Your many years of service, your warlike exploits, and your wide experience in the warlike training of troops give me full assurance that you, following the general directions of the Commander-in-Chief, will successfully lead to the attainment of the object of this war the army which is entrusted to you, and which will show its own faith and power of endurance in the fight against the foe for the honour and dignity of the Fatherland."

This was a very unwise step; for, by virtue of it, Kuropatkin was deposed *de facto*, though he still remained Commander-in-Chief *de jure*—an arrangement which did not promise well. But Nicholas was in great straits; and, not being in a position to act for himself, was swayed hither and thither by advice from all sides. He wound up his letter to Gripenberg with the following pathetic aspiration and appeal: "God bless you for your great and glorious services to me and to Russia. I remain your affectionate Nicholas"!

Stories now began to circulate which endued Gripenberg with marvellous abilities, just as Kuropatkin, Makaroff, Alexieff, and Vitoft had each been lauded on his first appointment. No species of kindness could have been more cruel to a man undertaking such a task as Gripenberg's.

The two opposing armies were now settled in the Valley of the Sha-ho, south-east of Mukden, and frequent skirmishes took place between September 25th and 30th. Russian reinforcements were rapidly arriving. The Circum-Baikal Railway was opened on September 25th; but nevertheless women and children were flying daily from Mukden, and no confidence was shown in the Russians.

This railway round the south shore of Lake Baikal was a costly undertaking, even with slave labour. It is about 152 miles long and runs through no less than thirty-three tunnels, which had to be pierced by dynamite, the cost of construction being £5,704,553. It was now possible to despatch ten trains of thirty carriages each daily from Irkutsk; whereas, before this link railway was made, when the trains used to be transferred to an immense ferry, only three trips were possible in a day with twenty-five carriages each journey.

At the end of September Nicholas went to Odessa and reviewed the troops about to embark for the Far East. The outlook for the Tsar was not inspiriting in any sense of the word. Even he must have seen that the war was beginning to evoke unmistakable expressions of unpopularity. The peasants obeyed the fresh conscription orders reluctantly; they did not want to fight; and nowhere was the disinclination more marked than in South Russia. Revolutionaries were being tried in secret at St. Petersburg and sentences of imprisonment and banishment were being pronounced against them.

The Japanese army was advancing in force towards the north, and it was evident that another battle was soon destined to take place. The first Japanese train ran through from Dalny to Liao-Yang on October 1st, and reinforcements were arriving regularly for Marshal Oyama's army.

On October 2nd Kuropatkin issued a carefully-composed order to his troops. He said that the Manchurian army had not hitherto been numerous enough to defeat the Japanese. He had given the order to retreat "with a sorrowful heart, but with unshaken confidence that it was necessary in order to gain a decisive victory when the time came."

Now, however, everything was changed: "The Emperor has assigned for the conflict with Japan forces sufficient to secure victory to Russia. All the great difficulties of transport have been overcome. If the regiments already sent out should prove insufficient, fresh troops will arrive, for the inflexible wish of the Emperor that the foe should be vanquished will be inflexibly fulfilled." And Kuropatkin the inflexible was the man destined to carry out the Emperor's programme. Kuropatkin went on to say that the Manchurian army was now "strong enough to begin a forward movement." It was assuredly numerous enough; and eye-witnesses in Harbin reported that reinforcements were arriving there at the rate of 3,000 men per day.

Such were the fair promises on the Russian side with which the month of October opened in Manchuria. Kuropatkin was to advance with overwhelming force. There were to be no more mistakes. The winter season was setting in, and Russia would now be fighting under the climatic conditions most suitable to her troops.

CHAPTER XVIII

Battle of the Sha-ho—Tsar and Mikado contrasted—Russian and Japanese accounts of the battle—Decisive Russian defeat—Great losses and captures—Japanese army advances—Stoessel's position in Port Arthur.

THE First Manchurian Army under Kuropatkin was now estimated to consist of 276 battalions, 122 batteries, and 173 sotnias, making over 200,000 infantry, 26,000 cavalry, and 950 cannons, the bare enumeration of his legions awakening memories of the hosts of Darius and Artaxerxes. Kuropatkin was apparently determined to crush Japan with this vast concourse of armed men, it being his interest to achieve something on his own initiative before Gripenberg was prepared to lead the Second Manchurian Army against the foe.

Preparations for a great trial of strength had been proceeding on both sides for some time, but they were conducted with such secrecy that the world scarcely heard of them. Within a week of his address to his troops Kuropatkin began his gigantic onslaught on the Japanese. On Sunday, October 9th, a Russian infantry brigade, 2,000 cavalry, and several guns crossed the Taitse River, at a point forty miles east of Liao-Yang, and several other brigades of Russian troops took up positions on the north side of the river prepared to support the advance column which had been sent across. General Kuroki's commu-

nications between Hsihoyen and Penhsihu were cut. Then the Japanese positions at Penhsihu were attacked, but the Russians failed to carry them after twelve hours' fighting. On the same day Kuropatkin's troops attacked the Japanese centre, and halted "near the railway, half-way between Liao-Yang and Mukden," where they were opposed by the Japanese vanguard.

The *métier* of the Russian army appeared to be to turn Marshal Oyama's right flank on General Kuroki's side; and it was in that quarter that the first real collision of forces took place.

The armies were now on the eve of a battle—nay, a battle had already commenced—which, judged by any standard whatsoever, was destined to be greater and more decisive than Liao-Yang. Kuropatkin was on his mettle; he had received ample reinforcements, and was apparently eager for the fight. The Japanese were no less ready for the fray. They, too, had been reinforced, but their numbers were fewer than the Russians.

On October 10th, the Mikado, alive to the impending emergency which might possibly prove ruinous to Japan, issued a rescript to his people, placing before them in plain, sensible words their exact position with regard to the war: "Since the outbreak of the war our army and navy have demonstrated their bravery and loyalty," said the Mikado, "while both officials and people have acted in unison to support the cause. So far success has attended us, but, the ultimate accomplishment being yet very far distant, it is necessary to be patient and steadfast in the pursuance of our action, and thus aim at the final accomplishment of our purpose."

What a contrast that address presented to the official documents issued by the Tsar and his deputies! The Mikado could say truly that "both officials and people

had acted in unison to support the cause." The Tsar could make no such claim. His people did not support him, for they felt that they had nothing to gain by the success of his army. All the fruits of victory would be swallowed by greedy Grand Dukes and official parasites, of the type Pobiedonostseff at home, or of Stoessel, Alexieff, Kuropatkin, and others in the field of action.

Instead of boasting, as he might naturally have done, of the herculean achievements of his soldiers and sailors, the Mikado's tone is rather deprecatory in alluding to past successes; and, so far from misleading his people into a sanguine view of the prospects of the campaign, he asks from them only patience and steadfastness. In all recorded history it would be difficult to find a display of wisdom, caution, and fortitude greater than that which illuminated the conduct of the Mikado, his generals and admirals during this war with Russia. If confidence was universal on the Japanese side, it was because truth and sincerity were universal amongst those in high positions. If there was a want of confidence on the Russian side, it was because truth and sincerity were conspicuous by their absence from the counsels of the Tsar and his advisers. The Russian generals did not trust each other; and the Tsar knew only too well that the nauseating flattery with which they overwhelmed him was dictated by self-interest rather than by loyalty or love of country.

What did Nicholas do on October 10th, the day the Mikado unbosomed himself to his people? Accompanied by Grand Admiral the Grand Duke Alexis, and by Admirals Avellan, Birileff, and Roshdestvensky, he reviewed, for the second time, in the roadstead at Reval, the Baltic Fleet destined for the Far East. That was his futile reply to the Mikado's trumpet-call.

In the month which had elapsed since Nicholas had last inspected the squadron, the ships had proceeded from Kronstadt to Reval, at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland, a distance of 150 miles, and over 15,000 miles of their voyage remained to be accomplished, when we left them at Langeland.

On Monday, October 10th, fighting between Kuroki's army and the Russians was continued. Positions were captured and recaptured. Two positions which the Russians had won from the Japanese were retaken by open assault in the daytime and by night attack. Marshal Oyama says, "Severe fighting continued till dark along the whole front of our route." He estimated the Russian strength opposed to his left army at six divisions of infantry with about 80 guns. General Oku made a forward movement to outflank the enemy in that quarter, and thereby relieve Kuroki, who was bearing the brunt of the Russian attack in the early stages of the battle.

When Oku moved it was always with deadly effect. He and Nodzu fought straight and heavily, while Kuroki had a knack of keeping off and out-manœuvring the enemy. Oku's army now fought until nightfall on Tuesday, October 11th, and after three days' fighting, the Russian forward movement was completely checked. The Russian right and centre had been driven back by Generals Oku and Nodzu with heavy losses. Oku alone had captured twenty-five guns. The Russians made violent counter-attacks against him, but were repulsed every time with enormous slaughter. Kuroki, on the right, having defeated the enemy, was pursuing them northward, and the Russians appeared to be in continuous retreat. Such was, in brief, the great battle of the Sha-ho, which we shall now consider in some detail.

Kuropatkin admitted that, his troops having held

their advanced positions against General Oku until nightfall on Wednesday, October 12th, "he had given them the order to retire." He also admitted that his troops were forced to retreat from the fighting front in the centre about 2 p.m. on the afternoon of that day. The word "insignificant" is no longer to be found in Kuropatkin's despatches. He admits that his losses were considerable—colossal would have been a more accurate description. He had given orders that the positions occupied should be "stubbornly defended," and they had been maintained up to the Tuesday night; but on the Wednesday he found it impossible to maintain them any longer.

Marshal Oyama reported that the Russian counter-attacks near Penhsihu were all repulsed on the Wednesday, and that Kuroki's army had sent a detachment eight miles to the north of that place to cut off the enemy's retreat. Kuroki had also occupied several eminences north-east of the Yentai mines and was vigorously pursuing the Russians.

The Japanese central army, under Nodzu, had not commenced operations until the Tuesday night; and then, fighting all through the night, they had gained the heights near Yentai on Wednesday morning, capturing several field-guns, 19 ammunition waggons, and 150 prisoners. The central army then joined with Kuroki's army in pursuit, and, in full daylight on Wednesday, a detachment of Russian artillery was "panic-stricken twelve miles to the east of Yentai," while the rest of the Russian army was retreating northward in disorder. General Oku's central column had advanced five miles and captured sixteen Russian guns. Pushing forward again, the same column captured four more guns, and repulsed all the enemy's counter-attacks. Oku's right column captured five guns and five ammunition waggons. The Russian

strategist did not get his artillery and ammunition away this time, as he had done at Liao-Yang.

Kuropatkin's reports of this battle are couched in a sober vein, but still in somewhat mystical, strategic parlance. In most instances he is only able to give information received at secondhand: "From reports received up to one o'clock this afternoon," he telegraphs on the Thursday, October 14th, the second day after the commencement of his retirement, "it appears that, on the 12th inst., two regiments of our right flank, having sustained considerable loss, retreated, leaving their artillery on the field. The brigadier in command was wounded and one of the regimental colonels was killed." Then follows a blunt confession of failure, equivocation being at length cast aside: "The final issue of the fighting on October 12th, on this flank, was, however, a failure for us, owing to a Japanese night attack. Our troops were not only forced to abandon their position, but again lost the guns which they had recovered from the Japanese."

Kuropatkin had not gone courageously into this fight. He had anticipated failure, despite the boastfulness of his address to his troops on October 2nd, and had prepared a safe retreat for himself beforehand. "Our troops," he continues, "retreated to a position prepared beforehand on the Sha-ho."

General Sakharoff gives us an account of the fight also. The First Manchurian Army had been attacked by the Japanese, who "took the offensive and delivered a vigorous and persistent attack" on the Russian right flank. It must be remembered that it was the Russians who had begun the battle on the 9th by an attack on the Japanese right flank. Sakharoff is now referring to Oku's heavy attack, which was not made until Monday, 10th. Sakharoff goes on to describe how the Russians maintained their positions, but the inevitable announce-

ment quickly follows disclosing defeat and retreat: "Orders were given in the morning that they should hold their ground until dusk, and then withdraw to the rear, in order that they might not be too much isolated. The retrograde movement began at six in the evening, and was carried out in perfect order." The Russian commanders had by this time become perfect adepts in the art of retreating.

The left wing of the Russian army, according to Sakharoff, was also fighting and capturing rocky hills in the passes from General Kuroki's men. But after this record of victory comes the confession of defeat again: "The Japanese, however, were strongly reinforced, and as there was a danger that our positions at that point might become isolated, the troops were ordered to withdraw a short distance to the rear. Our losses in the three days' fighting were considerable."

Marshal Oyama reported on October 15th that Oku's army had captured ten more guns. "On Friday, the 14th, throughout the entire front of all our armies the enemy was driven to the right bank of the Sha-ho, his plan of attack being then fundamentally frustrated." Marshal Oyama estimated the Russian casualties at 30,000. The Japanese had buried the bodies of over 2,000 Russians on the ground taken by General Oku's army alone. The booty captured by them included a vast quantity of rifles, ammunition, cars, and guns. The Russian bodies buried in front of General Nodzu's central army were 2,500. The total number of enemy's dead buried by the Japanese up to nightfall on October 15th was 8,850, the bodies found in front of Kuroki's army numbering 4,500. And many more were still to be found, for this figure "did not include General Oku's fighting from October 13th to 15th." The total Russian losses at Kuroki's side, where the battle had begun, were estimated at 20,000.

Marshal Oyama thus summarises the results of the fighting up to noon of Friday, October 14th: "As a sequel to a fight lasting continuously for five days, we have driven back the superior forces of the enemy at every point, pursuing him and forcing him to the south bank of the Hun. We have inflicted heavy losses and captured over thirty guns and hundreds of prisoners. We have defeated his plans and converted an offensive operation into a radical failure. His dead are everywhere, too numerous to be counted easily."

The centre Japanese army, under Nodzu, took 150 prisoners on October 13th, and 100 on October 14th, besides guns and ammunition.

Kuropatkin's pride had, as usual, gone before his fall. Telegraphing to the Tsar on October 15th he said: "On the night of the 13th large forces of the Japanese attacked the corps drawn up on the line of the Sha-ho River on the Great Mandarin Road. Several attacks were repulsed, but the last succeeded, and the centre of the corps was broken. At this moment fighting began on the right flank in a neighbouring section. The possibility of a rupture of the centre of our whole formation threatened the neighbouring troops and might force them to retreat. In order to support the troops on the Great Mandarin Road several battalions were rapidly pushed foward, and the troops were thus enabled to take the offensive." But the invincible Japanese repulsed the Russian reinforcements. "I then advanced my reserves," says Kuropatkin. "The troops defending the position resumed the offensive, and, after a stubborn fight, we succeeded in repulsing the Japanese and driving them back two kilometres."

Meantime, on the other side of Kuropatkin's army, where Oku was opposing him, things assumed a critical position for the Russians. "On our right wing

the position was for some time very alarming," says Kuropatkin. "The troops were attacked from the front and by a turning movement on the right flank. The chief of the detachment advanced the troops who were set apart for the last rally, and they, having attacked the Japanese from the flank in their turn, several of the villages were retaken by us, and the right wing maintained its position on the line of the Sha-ho." Kuropatkin then found that his centre columns were "noticeably advanced in comparison with the other troops"—that is to say, his right and left wings had been driven back. He therefore prepared a fortified position which "had been chosen beforehand." And his centre fell back.

His position was lamentable; and, stranger still, he seems to have felt it. That wail of personal suffering, which is never obtrusive in the Japanese despatches, becomes stentorian in the Russian report. "The troops have been fighting for four days," Kuropatkin says, "and many regiments have not slept for three nights." But he consoles the Tsar by adding, "Nevertheless, I have full hope in their capacity to continue the struggle. The Japanese losses must be very considerable."

Kuropatkin says, "The night of the 14th passed quietly." But hostilities were resumed next morning: "Before nine o'clock in the morning a rather marked movement of the enemy was noticed in the direction of our positions on the Great Mandarin Road. Our batteries opened fire on them. I have received a report from the commander of the left wing that the enemy is being strongly reinforced there. As was the case at Liao-Yang, the amount of heavy firing caused a storm to burst forth. It was followed by torrential rain, and the roads are in a very bad condition, and the level of the rivers has risen."

The stars in their courses were fighting against Kuropatkin. Everything was against him—the weather, the sleeplessness of his soldiers, the continuous fighting. But Kuropatkin would not confess the true cause of his failure, which was that his soldiers had not their hearts in their work. Those of them who possessed intellectual powers above the level of beasts and who could reason on the subject knew that when the war was over, even if the victory was with Russia, they would only return to slavery and living death.

Neither were the Russian soldiers bravely led. Countless stories are told of the cowardice of Russian officers in the field of battle. Any one who has read Tolstoy's personal experience of the Crimean War will remember how the Russian officers were cowards also in those days. Favouritism was then rife; and, just as dishonesty, peculation, and untruth of every description prevailed then in the Crimea, so they did now in Manchuria. There was this difference in Russia's favour in the Crimean days—she could then point, with some pardonable pride, to the fact that four European Powers had to combine in order to keep her at bay, namely, England, France, Turkey, and Sardinia. But to-day she was opposed only by one Power, and that composed of a race of people whom Pobiedonostseff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, Grand Inquisitor of Russia, Confidential Counsellor of Nicholas, will soon be heard dogmatically pronouncing to be "of the impure monkey species"!

Kuropatkin concluded his telegram on October 15th by informing the Tsar that "the general order for all the troops remained as before, namely, to offer the most resolute resistance." Orders are easily given, but not so easily executed. His offensive movement had ended in disaster; he was driven to assume the defensive, and was once more retreating before the

Japanese. All his boasted facilities of transport, his countless reinforcements, the favourable climatic conditions, the inflexible determination of the Emperor, the inflexible resolve of the General himself to do something before Gripenberg forestalled him, had all come to nothing; and his despatch concludes thus: "I have just received a report that considerable Japanese forces have crossed the railway line from west to east."

On Sunday, October 16th, Marshal Oyama telegraphed that six counter-attacks made on his left army were all repulsed with heavy loss on that day, and at the moment of telegraphing he was engaged in repelling another attack made by six battalions of Russian infantry and three batteries.

Sakharoff, telegraphing on the afternoon of the 16th, said that "on the whole the preceding day had passed comparatively easily." On October 17th he announced that his troops had captured a Japanese position. "The Japanese defended their ground with extreme stubbornness, and accepted a bayonet attack, in which many perished, being run through in their trenches. In the fight we took eleven field-guns and one quick-firing gun." The explanation of this triumph is to be found in a telegram from Marshal Oyama sent on the night of Monday, October 16th. The Japanese right army had been pursuing the enemy. "On the evening of the 16th a mixed force, under the command of Brigadier Yamada, drove back the enemy, captured two guns and two waggons, and marched forward to the village of Santao-Kautze, whence it repulsed the Russians." But Yamada's force had advanced too far. The Russians surrounded it. "It was fallen upon by a division of the enemy and enveloped. A fierce hand-to-hand combat ensued. The centre drove back the enemy, but the wings were compelled to cut their

passage through, abandoning nine field-guns and five mountain guns, the gunners and horses of which had been shot down." The Japanese Marshal, "while regretting the loss of guns for the first time in the war, regarded General Yamada's disaster on the 16th as one of the inevitable incidents in a protracted struggle."

Marshal Oyama, on the 18th, said that the enemy's forces seemed to be gradually diminishing. During the night of the 17th they had made a frontal attack on the central army and were repulsed. The Japanese left had now advanced to within eleven miles south of Mukden, and the Russians at that point were defending themselves on the south side of the Hun River, as they had defended themselves on the south side of the Taitse at Liao-Yang. The component columns of the Japanese line were now in the same relative positions as they had been before the battle, with this difference, that they were about fifteen miles farther north. The Russian advance had been stopped, and the Japanese line had been brought up to the River Sha-ho. Isolated engagements between outposts were still taking place; but, in the main, the armies were both resting, and there was peace for the moment.

At home it was stated that General Kuropatkin's retirement "had caused profound gloom in St. Petersburg," and that "the pessimistic feeling now prevailing forms a striking contrast with the elation which followed the Commander-in-Chief's recent proclamation." It was also reported that no less than 23,000 Russian wounded had arrived at Mukden.

The total Japanese casualties in the battle of the Sha-ho and subsidiary fights from October 9th to October 25th were officially returned at 15,879 officers and men killed, wounded, and missing. It was also officially certified that the total number of Russian corpses buried was 13,333, of which 5,200 were

accounted for by Kuroki, 5,603 by Oku, and 2,530 by Nodzu. The booty was returned at 45 cannons and 6,920 rounds of ammunition. The number of prisoners taken in the battle was 709, raising the total number of Russian prisoners then in Japanese custody to over 4,000.

An official account of casualties was retuoned by the Russians which only covered the fighting from the 9th to the 18th of October, in which they acknowledged their loss in killed, wounded, and missing to have been 880 officers and 45,000 men. An Imperial decree was published on October 25th reappointing Kuropatkin Commander-in-Chief of all the land forces in the East, and reappointing Alexieff Viceroy of the Far East. Like the military honours conferred after Liao-Yang, this decree constituted an official implication that the defeat at the Sha-ho had been a victory. But it also had another meaning, for in a few weeks afterwards General Linievitch came from Vladivostock and took charge of the First Manchurian Army. Kuropatkin, "the court favourite," was now theoretically in supreme command, while the actual command lay in the hands of Linievitch and Gripenberg. The idea seemed to be to remove Kuropatkin without disgracing Russia, but while he retained the command it was naturally impossible to discover a more suitable generalissimo.

In his last despatch to St. Petersburg Kuropatkin is alleged to have said, "The activity of the Japanese is untiring; none but the Russian troops are capable of withstanding such a foe." This reads like an attempt to interpret the battle of the Sha-ho as another "magnificent victory." From a trustworthy source it was also stated that Kuropatkin had unofficially spoken "in glowing terms of the bravery of the Japanese, saying that they were a brave foe, also that they were most

correct in the observance of the rules of war. In this respect," he added, "it was the pleasantest war he had ever been in"[1]—a somewhat frivolous expression of opinion to come from a man in his position.

The armies of Japan were indeed a luminous example to the armies of the Tsar. The Russian general staff at St. Petersburg, all through the months of August, September, and October, had been regularly receiving, through the French Embassy in the Russian capital, "large numbers of carefully-fastened packets," containing jewels, cigar-cases, purses, watches, gold crosses, and sums of money, found by the Japanese on the bodies of Russian officers and soldiers buried by them after battles!

The professional strategists at Paris and St. Petersburg now began to contend that the army under Kuropatkin's command was too large to be successfully handled by any one commander. A French writer, whose military works are said to be used as text-books in the Russian academies, said "he defied any soldier, however talented, to command and direct in person such a number of military units."[2] Neither Moltke nor Napoleon had ever attempted to command personally so large an army as Kuropatkin had in the battle of the Sha-ho.

Kuropatkin had failed in all his previous battles with the Japanese because he had not had enough of troops. It appears that he had now failed because he had too many. Such was the absurd position into which Russia and her apologists were now driven. Every explanation of failure was advanced except the true one, namely, that the Russian soldiers were determined not to fight, because there was no advantage whatever for them in a Russian victory. If the Tsar were vic-

[1] Reuter's correspondent with the Russian Centre Army.
[2] Lieutenant-Colonel Rousset, in the *Gaulois*.

torious the chains of the autocracy would be drawn tighter on the limbs of the peasants. If the Tsar were defeated, on the other hand, it was possible that the chains would be lightened and loosened as the result of his downfall.

To lose was to win; to triumph was to be defeated!

The French papers, as representing the French people, had a keen interest in Russia, for almost all the millions of Russia's recent indebtedness had been advanced by French investors. It was significant, therefore, that at this point the French newspapers began to advocate intervention and mediation. They were even prepared to go so far as to put aside their hostility to Germany and call upon the Emperor William to act as mediator. "Enough Russian blood had flown to expiate the folly of Alexieff, the faults of the administration, and the weakness of a Tsar as good as he is incapable."[1] The condition of Russia was indeed humiliating when her creditors, actuated by the best intentions, could tender her such advice.

But all had not yet been lost. The Baltic Fleet was on its way East. Honour had not yet been sacrificed. "The fifty thousand Russians who have been laid low in the fields of Manchuria and Port Arthur proudly proclaim that honour is safe."[2] In the Frenchman's opinion Russia might mediate without loss of *prestige* as long as Port Arthur remained uncaptured.

Meantime affairs had been progressing badly in Port Arthur. Stoessel's despatches continued almost as sanguine and bombastic as ever, but still the Japanese were closing in upon him. On October 13th, while the battle was raging on the Sha-ho, the Tsar received a telegram despatched by Stoessel on October 5th. The Japanese had increased the

[1] Comte de St. Maurice, in the *Gil Blas*.

[2] *Ibid*.

number of their guns against his north front, but their attack in that direction had been stopped "by volleys from Lieutenant-Colonel Gandaurine's detachment." The Japanese had attacked Signal Hill quite close to the sea, had repulsed Stoessel's sharpshooters, and occupied it; but on the following morning the Russians had retaken it. "Our indefatigable hero, General Kondrachenko, is continually inventing fresh means of striking the enemy," says the sanguine Stoessel; "the troops continue to show themselves heroic, and the wounded return to the ranks full of ardour." Stoessel had got them under his thumb; they could not very well desert from him.

On October 7th Stoessel says that the Japanese had organised fresh batteries to bombard the interior of the fortress, and that they had received reinforcements of several battalions. "The weather is cold," he adds, with a chatter, "the spirit of the troops is excellent. All, from their chief to the last soldier, are ever eager to fight the enemy"! No such vaingloriousness is to be found in the Japanese despatches, which are for the most part confined to necessary statements of fact, and if they are occasionally couched in a personal strain, it is one of modesty and caution.

CHAPTER XIX

Discontent in Russia—Respite from hostilities in Manchuria—Voyage of the Baltic Fleet—Dogger Bank outrage—Inactivity of our Navy—Roshdestvensky's explanation—Finding of the Commission—The Russian Volunteer Fleet's depredations—The torpedo-destroyer *Caroline*.

WHILE the autocracy was thus demonstrating its incompetence abroad, disturbances still continued at home. After the battle of the Sha-ho one of the Russian Liberal newspapers[1] sarcastically resented the imputation that Russia's disasters were due to "the unpatriotic attitude of the Russian public." How could the Russian public be responsible for anything, said the *Viedomosti*, "deprived as it is of any share in the political life of the Empire, and even of any opportunity for expressing its opinion on Imperial questions?" Russia was "asleep in obedience to orders." The country resembled nothing so much as the dormitory of a Russian police-station, "where any one who ventures to raise his hand is at once met by the stern command to hold his tongue and lie quiet."

In South Russia the discontent was almost as intense as it was in Poland. There was rioting at Odessa, and convoys of prisoners were to be seen every evening conveyed in chains, with strong escorts of soldiers and police, on their way to the penal settle-

[1] *Russkiya Viedomosti*, October 19, 1904.

ments in Kherson. It was rumoured that the Russian Government contemplated the possibility of being compelled to draw upon the Church for means to prosecute the war;[1] the Greek Orthodox Church of Russia being, like the Roman Church, a rich corporation which for many generations has been amassing treasures in the midst of poverty. Its chief temples contain vast quantities of "solid gold, silver, bronze, mosaic work of extraordinary value, and ikons and sacred paintings, hundreds of which are priceless and could never be replaced." If they were once removed, it is to be hoped that no one would seriously contemplate replacing them.

The Tsar was still feverishly busy. His latest resource was the conferment of honours upon Crimean veterans, to whom he gave pensions and medals at this belated stage of their existence. In honour of the saint's-day of the baby Tsarevitch, Nicholas also promoted a number of captains, who had distinguished themselves in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–8, to the rank of lieutenant-colonels. This may have been intended to act as an inducement to the troops of the Manchurian armies to "make ramparts of their bodies," in the hope that if any of them happened to be alive in the years 1934 or 1954, they might then receive pensions, medals, or promotion.

The armies in Manchuria continued in a state of partial repose for several days, while each side was settling itself down in its new surroundings, Kuropatkin preparing fresh positions for future retreat, the Japanese perfecting their extended line of communications. On General Oku's side the distance between the advanced trenches of the Russians and Japanese was only 700 yards.

There had been no cheery news from Stoessel

[1] *The Times*' Russian correspondent.

recently, and it was unofficially reported from several quarters that the Japanese were tightening their grip daily upon the fortress. They had constructed immense warehouses between Dalny and Port Arthur, and filled them with supplies "sufficient to last till spring."

The remnant of hope now left to Port Arthur rested entirely upon Roshdestvensky and the Baltic Fleet. We last left that squadron at Langeland, on October 19th, steaming through the Great Belt northward into the Kattegat. For three days nothing further was heard of it; the progress through the Kattegat and Skaggerak was made without accident, and the fleet emerged into the North Sea. Roshdestvensky appears to have expected an immediate Japanese attack. He seemed to see Admirals Togo, Kamimura, Uriu, and Ikadzuki all around him in the winds, the clouds, and the waves. The scared crew of the *Tsarevitch* who rushed upon the German Governor at Kiao-Chao were not, it seems, more savagely nervous than Roshdestvensky and his men.

On the night of Friday, October 21st, the Russian look-out espied a fleet ahead, anchored apparently, and ready for action, nets out too, evidently having laid mines for Roshdestvensky's destruction! It was the world-famous fishing fleet on the Dogger Bank, two hundred miles out from the Yorkshire coast—that great floating colony of which every reputable school-boy in North Europe has heard as one of the wonders of the world. Roshdestvensky, like Don Quixote, seems not to have been seeing things as they really were, and he beheld in the peaceful trawlers a hostile and innumerable fleet of Japanese battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and torpedo-boats.

To Roshdestvensky, as to the Knight-Errant in his maiden armour, it seemed that the coveted opportunity

for distinction had presented itself. His ships were cleared for action, and for twenty minutes he furiously bombarded the hostile fleet. Finding that no reply was made to his cannonade, he steamed away, having first detached a warship from his squadron to watch the operations of the fishing fleet. The Russian man-of-war stayed at her post of observation until 6 a.m.; and it is asserted that "during the whole of that period not a single boat was lowered to pick up any survivors of the sunken trawler, or render any assistance to those injured on any of the vessels struck." This warship then followed in the track of Roshdestvensky, who had steamed away at full speed without deigning to inquire what damage he had done.

> "And we took to playing at battles, but that was a perilous play,
> For the passion of battle was in us, we slew, and we sailed away."

Roshdestvensky steamed down the North Sea, through the Straits of Dover, along the English Channel, across the width of the Bay of Biscay, and was not heard of until he reached the Spanish port of Vigo, on Wednesday morning, October 26th. There he dropped anchor with four of his best battleships—the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, *Borodino*, *Orel*, and *Alexander III.*, and the transport *Amadul.* He signalled diplomatically to the Port Commandant: "Our ships are damaged. This is why I have separated from the remainder of the squadron."

The damage done to the Hull fishing fleet was serious, but not as ruinous as it might have been. One steam trawler had been sunk, her captain and one of the men had been decapitated by the Russian shots, while several members of her crew were wounded. Other vessels of the fleet also sustained injuries,

When two steam trawlers arrived at St. Andrew's Dock, Hull, on the afternoon of Monday, October 24th, riddled with shot and flying their flags half-mast-high, the excitement in the great Humber port passed all bounds. The skipper of the *Moulmein*, the trawler which brought home the dead fishermen, stated that the Gamecock and Northern fleet—two of the many fleets permanently stationed on the Dogger Bank—had been fishing at a point 220 miles east by north of Spurn Head at one o'clock on the morning of Saturday, October 22nd, when they saw several large ships approaching them in line. Searchlights were flashed upon the trawlers, and warships came in amongst them as if about to board them. The fishermen stopped their work and looked on in amazement at the procession of ghost-like leviathans, guessing that it was the Baltic Fleet about which they had seen so much in the newspapers. They speculated on the chances of selling a quantity of fish to the men-of-war. But their astonishment and speculation were soon turned into consternation when they found that they and their ships were being fired upon by the squadron. A hail of shot and shell began to fly around them, and the crews of most of the trawlers took refuge by going below.

The trawler *Crane* was so badly damaged that she was sinking. Several of her crew had been injured. Her skipper, Mr. George Smith, and one of the fishermen, John Leggett, had their heads blown away. The engineer had a wound in his chest, one deck hand had a severe wound in his thigh, and another had his hand shot off. The *Mino* had shot-holes "almost from stem to stern." The *Moulmein* had received several shots, and her crew had a providential escape. They were just proceeding to take refuge in the galley, when a cannon-ball struck that retreat on the port side and

passed out at the starboard side. The bombardment ceased as suddenly as it had begun; the Russian fleet put up steam, and brutally sailed away, leaving, it was alleged, one warship behind them to watch the fishing fleet for some hours, and to depart in her turn without rendering aid or making inquiries.

The proprietors of the fishing fleet took counsel, and on Monday sent a deputation up to London, to the Foreign Office, and lodged a complaint of what had occurred. The Foreign Office issued an official communication to the Press on Tuesday, October 25th, in which it stated that it had been "in communication with the representatives of the fishing industry of Hull and Grimsby, and had obtained from them a full statement of the facts connected with the attack made during the night of the 21st instant by the Russian Baltic Fleet upon a part of the Hull trawling fleet. Urgent representations based upon this information had been addressed to the Russian Government at St. Petersburg, and it had been explained that the situation was one which, in the opinion of his Majesty's Government, did not admit of delay."

Lord Knollys sent the following telegram to the Mayor of Hull: "The King commands me to say that he has heard with profound sorrow of the unwarrantable action which has been committed against the North Sea fishing fleet, and to ask you to express the deepest sympathy of the Queen and his Majesty with the families who have suffered from this most lamentable occurrence."

There was nothing else to be done. We might have taken some precautions before the accident, but, as we had not done so, we could only accept Russia's apology, and secure compensation from her for the injured parties. We had absolutely refused, as we shall see, to protect British shipping from the Russian

privateers. Who could have been so sanguine as to expect us to place a few guardships in the vicinity of the Dogger fleet? But, on the other hand, who would have anticipated that Russian naval officers would have acted after so insane a fashion? Those who had seen their conduct in the Yellow Sea and the Gulf of Pechili might have anticipated such a freak, but Europeans expected civilised behaviour from them.

On Wednesday, August 26th, the Admiralty sent the newspapers another official communication: "After the receipt of the news of the tragedy in the North Sea on Monday, the 24th, preliminary orders for mutual support and co-operation were, as a measure of precaution, issued from the Admiralty to the Mediterranean, Channel, and Home Fleets." Not a single ship of these three fleets had done anything, during the summer months, to protect British commerce from molestation on the high seas. The only overt act which it will be our duty to place to their credit will be the delivery of a message from the Tsar to the commanders of the official Russian privateers. If our three fleets in European waters had been under the command of Nicholas of Russia, they could not have been more complaisant.

Public indignation against Roshdestvensky found vent in the newspapers; but there was never the least danger of our going to war with Russia. At most we could only call the attention of Europe and America to the outrage in the most formal manner possible, with a view to obtaining some international security that, on similar occasions in future, civilised public opinion might ensure immunity from neutrals peacefully employed. Sir Henry Seymour King, M.P., accompanied by Dr. Jackson, solicitor to the proprietors of the Gamecock fleet, called upon the Foreign Office

and formally demanded adequate protection for British trawlers in the Bay of Biscay and along the Spanish coast. The Foreign Office, at the request of the deputation, guaranteed to undertake that duty, and a Board of Trade inquiry was at once instituted at Hull into the circumstance and result of the attack on the fishing fleets.

A curious incident occurred at Victoria railway station on the evening of Monday, October 24th, the day on which the details of the outrage had been made public. Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador in London, arrived at Victoria from Germany at ten o'clock p.m., and his carriage was surrounded by a number of persons, who gave him a hostile reception. It may have been the presence of a large body of police at the railway station that gave the public information of the Russian minister's expected arrival. But, from whatever source the demonstration originated, it is to be hoped that Count Benckendorff was thereby made cognisant of the heinous conduct of the officers of the Baltic Fleet.

A diplomatic note was presented to the Russian Government which astutely took the safest course open to it, and apologised. Count Lamsdorff called at the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, and gave our ambassador a verbal message from the Tsar to King Edward and the British Government. Nicholas said that, "while he had received no news from the admiral in command of the fleet, he could only attribute the incident in the North Sea to a very regrettable misunderstanding." He expressed "his sincere regret for the sad loss of life that had occurred," and "would take steps to afford complete satisfaction to the sufferers as soon as the circumstances of the case were cleared up." The Russian Admiralty "had no knowledge of where the Baltic

Fleet was or was likely to be in the immediate future, as there was no means of communicating with the squadron"! Perhaps the Russian Admiralty had not official knowledge, but assuredly Nicholas was not unaware of Roshdestvensky's next coaling station.

The English trawlers had not been the only targets for Roshdestvensky's shots. The Swedish steamer, *Aldebaran*, "was chased by a foreign warship" on the night of the 21st, which "poured a perfect hail of bullets all around her but without hitting her." The master of the Norwegian steamer *Skaato* on her way to London on the following day, Sunday, says he met a Russian man-of-war which "fired on his steamer in the Channel, but ceased when he hoisted the Norwegian flag." The German trawler *Sonntag* reported that "while off the Dogger Bank she was bombarded by the Russian fleet for two and a half hours, but was not hit." On October 30th an indignation meeting, attended by over 3,000 persons, was held at Hamburg, and a resolution was passed protesting against "the unwarranted action of Russian warships against peaceful fishermen in the North Sea. The meeting especially expresses horror at the cowardice of the Russian commander in abandoning the fishermen to their fate after firing upon them and not standing by to offer assistance."

Drunken Tam O'Shanter's mad race had not been a whit more panic-stricken apparently than the Russian admiral's flight from Dogger Bank to Vigo. But it soon began to appear that there was method in his madness. There were five large German colliers with full cargoes awaiting the Baltic Fleet's arrival at Vigo. The Spanish commandant sent an aide-de-camp to request Roshdestvensky "not to violate Spanish neutrality" by coaling in the harbour. The commandant also notified the captains of the colliers

that they should not break the neutrality laws by supplying coal to the belligerent fleet in Spanish waters. Roshdestvensky's conduct now was characteristically Russian. Accompanied by his captains, he came ashore in state in the afternoon and paid official visits to the Governor, Commandant, and French Consul, being received by a guard of honour with a band. He gave "his word of honour" that he would not coal in Spanish waters, but meanwhile two of the five colliers continued to lie alongside his fleet, and the remaining three set sail for Tangier to await the fleet's arrival there.

Roshdestvensky's report on the outrage was composed in the peaceful shelter of Vigo Harbour, and was published by the Russian Admiralty on October 28th. In characteristic Russian style, worthy of Manchuria, he unblushingly brazened out his error of judgment. One could not blame him for being on his guard against attack. It is understood that an agreement had been arrived at with Japan that warlike operations should not be carried on in Europe, similar to that which had been come to with the United States during that country's war with Spain, but Roshdestvensky was not prepared to put any faith in that undertaking. "*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*"

His report is not manly or soldierlike in tone, but argumentative and shifty, like all the Russian official documents dealt with in this volume. "The incident of the North Sea," he says, "was provoked by two torpedo-boats which, without showing any lights, under cover of darkness, advanced to attack the vessel steaming at the head of the detachment. When the detachment began to sweep the sea with its searchlights and opened fire, the presence was also discovered of several small steam vessels resembling small steam fishing-boats. The detachment en-

deavoured to spare these boats and ceased fire as soon as the torpedo-boats were out of sight. The English Press is horrified at the idea that the torpedo-boats of the squadron, left by the detachment until the morning on the scene of the occurrence, did not render assistance to the victims. Now, there was not a single torpedo-boat with the detachment and none were left on the scene of the occurrence. In consequence it was one of the two torpedo-boats, which was not sunk, but which was only damaged, which remained until the morning near the small craft. The detachment did not assist the small steam craft because it suspected them of complicity, in view of their obstinate persistence in cutting the line of advance of the warships. Several of them did not show any lights at all. The others showed them very late. Having met several hundreds of fishing-boats, the squadron showed them every consideration, except where they were in company of the foreign torpedo-boats, one of which disappeared, while the other, according to the evidence of the fishermen themselves, remained among them until the morning. They believed her to be a Russian vessel, and were indignant that she did not come to the assistance of the victims. She was, however, a foreigner, and remained until the morning looking for the other torpedo-boat, her companion, either with the object of repairing her damage or from fear of betraying herself to those who were not accomplices. If there were also on the scene of the occurrence fishermen imprudently involved in this enterprise, I beg, in the name of the whole fleet, to express our sincere regret for the unfortunate victims of circumstances, in which no warship could, even in time of profound peace, have acted otherwise."

In effect he accuses the Hull fishing fleet of having

conspired to shelter two Japanese torpedo-boats which had expressly come out to sink a Russian warship. His apology only extends to those fishermen who were "imprudently involved in this enterprise." All alike, then, were partners in the conspiracy, some prudently, others imprudently! He denies that he left one of his own ships behind, and, building upon the fishermen's statement that a warship did linger on the scene for some hours, he forces the conclusion that there must have been foreign warships present and that the ship referred to was one of them.

"The story is so ridiculous that it is not worth a denial," said Viscount Hayashi, the Japanese ambassador in London; "I would, however, myself ask a few questions which perhaps the Russians may be able to answer. How is it possible that Japanese torpedo-boats or other small craft could have remained constantly at sea in wait for the Baltic Fleet ever since it was first reported to be on the point of sailing? Is it known by what means such vessels could exist away from bases for food, water, or coal? Is it generally regarded as possible that torpedo-boats could make the voyage from the Far East to the British coasts without coaling and without their presence being known?"

The Russians then suggested that the torpedo-boats hidden amongst the fishing fleet had been recently purchased in England, but that fiction was exploded by the most irrefragable testimony. Roshdestvensky's statement received no credence anywhere. The *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten* said the "explanation was incredible." The *Siècle* saw in Roshdestvensky's report "no reason for sinking English vessels." The *Petite République* said "the version will meet with no credence." The Austrian papers looked upon Roshdestvensky's report as "a fairy tale." In America the

Russian admiral was universally condemned and discredited.

Mr. A. J. Balfour, speaking in Southampton, on the day that Roshdestvensky's report was published, said: "I think myself justified in expressing publicly my disbelief in the existence of these phantom Japanese ships. . . . In the opinion of experts whom I have had the opportunity of consulting, the nearest Japanese ships of war happen to be 14,000 miles away."

An International Commission was soon afterwards appointed to inquire into the circumstances of the outrage. It consisted of four members, representing Great Britain, Russia, France, and the United States, presided over by an umpire appointed by the Emperor of Austria. But the evidence of the Russian witnesses and the attitude taken up by some members of the Court went far to lessen the permanent benefit likely to result from its findings. The Commission reported on February 23, 1905, that it was unable to agree as to what object the Russian ships had fired on; but it was agreed that the trawlers committed no hostile act and that there were no torpedo craft on the spot. It was also held that the Russian admiral was justified in not having stopped to render assistance, but that he should have conveyed information of the accident, by wireless telegraphy or otherwise, to France or England.

Some weeks afterwards it was announced that Russia had agreed to pay a sum of £65,023 19s. 1d. as compensation, which included £5,000 to the widow of Skipper Smith, £2,000 to the man whose hand was shot away, and £1,000 to the relatives of John Leggett.

The serious aspect of the escapade for the British citizen's consideration is that the Russian admiral was able to perpetrate the outrage and afterwards scurry through hundreds of miles of British waters, without

encountering a British warship. Our men-of-war seem to have given too wide a berth to the marine mad dog. We shall presently relate how the *Smolensk* and *Petersburg* and other Russian volunteers had been given a free hand by our warships in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. It appeared now as if exhaustive arrangements had been made by the British Admiralty to clear the way for Roshdestvensky in his passage through the Straits of Dover and the English Channel.

On the same day that the Russian battleships had reached Vigo it was announced that our Home Fleet had arrived at the Firth of Forth! We were neutral, it is true; but then, why should we hesitate to protect our own property? Never before, probably, had there been such a mysterious disappearance of British warships from the North Sea, English Channel, Bay of Biscay, North Atlantic, South African waters, Indian Ocean, and Red Sea as that which took place while the Russian Government's privateers were raiding our ships along the chief trade routes from March to October, and while Roshdestvensky was committing his outrage on British fishermen and escaping afterwards. It was asked if our navy, under the direction of Lord Selborne, was imitating the Prime Minister's conduct on recent critical occasions, and was keeping out of harm's way. It was our policy to avoid war; and there could not have been a wiser policy for us under the circumstances; but the taxpayers would have been better pleased if evidence had been forthcoming to show that the British navy was policing the high seas. The general opinion was that we need not have been so excessively timid, so preposterously ladylike. But while that opinion was, doubtless, justified, it must not be forgotten that if a conflict between British and Russian warships had taken place, disastrous consequences might have supervened, and we must give to

those responsible for the conduct of public affairs due credit for keeping that serious eventuality before their minds.

The North Sea outrage gave Europe an object-lesson in the methods adopted by Russia in Manchuria and Korea. In that quarter of the world such an incident as that at the Dogger Bank and the subsequent behaviour and explanations of the Russian admiral would have excited no surprise; for outrage, preceded and followed by untruth, has been the staple of Russian policy in the Far East.

Our warships, it was now understood, were to be aroused from their inactivity and put on their mettle for the protection of British shipping pursuing peaceful avocations on the high seas. The Russian Volunteer Fleet, alluded to in a previous chapter,[1] was henceforth to be watched. It had already done considerable damage; and if the Japanese had followed the Russian example and sent privateers into European waters, trade would have been completely dislocated and disorder would have reigned supreme on the ocean.

On July 20th the P. & O. steamer *Malacca* had been seized in the Red Sea, manned by a Russian prize crew, and conveyed back to Suez, where she arrived flying the Russian naval flag, and stated that her destination was St. Petersburg. She was admitted to the canal, but the authorities detained her at Port Said. The *Malacca* had no contraband on board, merely a cargo of supplies for Hong Kong. The captain protested without effect against the seizure of his ship, and returned to London to report to the owners, the passengers being transferred to the P. & O. liner *Marmora*, while the crew came home. On the same day a German mail steamer, the *Prince Heinrich*, was

[1] Chapter XIII.

seized, her mails ransacked, and the Japanese bags confiscated. A British steamer, the *Persia*, was detained in the Red Sea by the Russians, and two bags of mails for Japan were seized and carried off. Another British steamer, the *Dragoman*, bound for China, was seized and delayed in the Red Sea.

The Ellerman line steamship, *Crewe Hall*, was next stopped by the Russian volunteers on her voyage to Bombay. The *Menelaus*, of the Alfred Holt line, was also stopped. The P. & O. Company then issued a notice that they would not ship any cargo for ports beyond Shanghai; and Messrs. W. Thompson & Co. and the Ben Steamship Line followed the same course.

The Anchor Line steamer *Asia* arrived at Port Said on August 25th, and reported that she had been stopped by the Russian cruiser *Ural* in the Atlantic Ocean, eighty miles south-east of Cape St. Vincent, in Portugal, and her papers had been examined. The steamer *Pencalenick*, bound from Cardiff to Malta with coal for the British navy, was also stopped by the *Ural*. The Russian officers boarded her and examined her papers, and after an hour's detention allowed her to proceed.

All Europe condemned these proceedings; but, in our own case, the contingency was one which might have been foreseen and provided for, as we maintain our immense fleet principally for police work on the trade routes. If some German ships had not been molested, it seems probable that the Russian volunteers might have carried on their depredations for an indefinite length of time.

This so-called "volunteer fleet" of Russia occupies a position of quasi-independence, in the same way as Alexieff did in his capacity of Viceroy of the Far East. It is nominally a fleet of merchantmen and used not to

come under the jurisdiction of the Russian Admiralty. It consists of about twenty ships, which in times of peace ply as transports on the Black Sea, between Odessa and Transcaucasia, and as transports and merchantmen between South Russia and Vladivostock, Port Arthur, Dalny, and the Sea of Japan. Russia is not permitted to send warships through the Dardanelles, and the maintenance of this semi-independent squadron was one of the subterfuges by which she contrived to break her treaties in Europe.

Before 1886 this volunteer fleet was virtually independent of the Admiralty; but, emboldened by long immunity, the Tsar in that year placed the ships under the management of his Board of Admiralty. But, with true Russian jesuitry, he allowed the fleet to retain its own management and capital concurrently, so that its ships might not come within the technical definition of warships; and so that Russian diplomatists might, in certain eventualities, disclaim responsibility for the volunteer ships, and might pass them through the Dardanelles on warlike missions, although that important waterway is closed by treaty against regular men-of-war. It was proved beyond doubt that one of the volunteers, the *Petersburg*, had passed through the Dardanelles under a merchant flag and afterwards hoisted a war flag.

European opinion was now almost unanimous in condemning the conduct of the Russian volunteers. An Austrian newspaper caustically said that "Lord Palmerston would in a similar case have instructed the nearest British admiral to treat as pirates vessels which fly a war-flag without proper title and arrogate to themselves the rights of warships, after having, as merchantmen, slipped through waterways protected by international agreements."[1] Mr. A. J. Balfour did

[1] *Neues Wiener Tagblatt.*

not feel inclined to emulate Lord Palmerston's example in this instance. We lodged a diplomatic protest through our ambassador at St. Petersburg, enigmatically stating that "a very serious question was involved." The Russian Admiralty expressed its regret, but insisted upon the right to transform the volunteers into cruisers after they had passed the Dardanelles.

It was proved indubitably that all the arms on board the *Malacca* were the property of the British Government and were intended for the China squadron, all the cases being clearly marked with the broad arrow. The Russian Government condescended to waive its right to bring in the *Malacca* before the Prize Court, undertook that no similar accidents should occur again, and consented to pay ample damages.

The Russian Vladivostock fleet, instead of fighting the Japanese, was also making war upon merchantmen. A British steamer, the *Knight Commander*, bound from New York and Manilla to Shanghai and Yokohama with a general cargo, was attacked by them and sunk.

The Russian admiral's report says: "On the morning of July 23rd a large vessel was met, which only stopped after a fourth shot had been fired at her. On the vessel being boarded it was found that it was the British merchant steamer *Knight Commander*, bound from New York *viâ* Europe, to Yokohama and Kobe. According to incomplete documents in the possession of the captain, and according to his declaration, it was shown that the vessel was carrying to Japan a cargo of from 3,000 to 4,000 tons, composed mostly of railway material and constituting a considerable part of her cargo. Having established the fact that the *Knight Commander* was undoubtedly carrying on contraband traffic for a belligerent party, and not

being able to bring her to the nearest Russian port, owing to her not having enough coal on board, without manifest danger for the squadron, we sank the *Knight Commander* after taking off all her crew and removing her papers." The same squadron also captured a German vessel, and a British steamer the name of which was unknown. They met another British steamer, the *Tsinan*, and stopped her, but did not proceed to extremities; they entrusted the crew of the *Knight Commander* to her keeping, and she conveyed them safely to Yokohama. But the European passengers of the *Knight Commander* were taken on board a Russian warship to Vladivostock, where the Prize Court decided that the *Knight Commander* was a lawful prize. The British steamer *Cheltenham* was also seized and carried off to Vladivostock, having on board a cargo of sleepers for the Fusan-Seoul Railway.

The sinking of the *Knight Commander* evoked a telegram of explanation from Vice-Admiral Skrydloff, which gives a vivid picture of the operations of the Russian ships and the amount of damage they were doing: "Rear-Admiral Jessen, whom I sent to the east coast of Japan," says Admiral Skrydloff, "with a force composed of three cruisers, reports that his squadron left Sangan Strait on July 20th. In the ocean they met a small Japanese vessel, the *Okassima Maru*, which, after the crew had left her, was sunk. The crew made for the coast in boats. At the same time the British vessel *Camara* was stopped and questioned. . . . Shortly afterwards the coasting steamer *Kildounion Maru* was met. She carried fifty passengers, most of whom were women, a fact which determined us to release her. Steaming south we met two Japanese schooners following each other. They were both laden with fish and salt. The schooners

were destroyed after the crews had been taken off. On July 22nd, one hundred miles from Yokohama, the German steamer *Arabia* was stopped. She had a considerable amount of contraband cargo on board, an assortment of raw material and flour consigned to Japanese ports. The *Arabia* was sent to Vladivostock."

After the encounter with the *Knight Commander* two Japanese schooners, with full cargoes of salt, were destroyed. On July 24th the German steamer *Thea*, bound from America to Yokohama with a full cargo of fish, was sighted and stopped. "She was regarded as a legal prize," says Skrydloff, "and after her crew had been taken off, the *Thea* was sunk, owing to the impossibility of bringing her to a Russian port." On July 25th the British steamer *Calchas* was seized and carried off to Vladivostock as a prize. "On July 30th the squadron proceeded toward the Tsugaru Strait. At about three o'clock," he continues, "near the northern coast, a Japanese third-class cruiser, apparently the *Takao*, with three torpedo-boats, was sighted, and behind it a sailing vessel of the *Congo* type, with four torpedo-boats. These vessels were taking the same course as the detachment. Simultaneously there appeared on the left coast of the Straits a coast defence battleship of the *Sayen* type. All these ships kept far astern of ours, and at five o'clock they turned back."

If we render the last sentence in plain English it should read: "We fled for our lives, and the Japanese warships dropped far astern, and gave up the pursuit." It is obvious from this record that the Vladivostock squadron was engaged in piratical looting on the high seas off the islands of Japan. Their courage oozed out at their finger-ends when a Japanese warship came in sight, and they fled for their lives to Vladivostock.

On July 16th the British steamer *Hipsang*, bound from Niuchwang to Chifu, was sunk by the Russian torpedo-boat destroyer *Rastoropni* in the Gulf of Pechili. The *Hipsang* stopped when called upon to do so, but the Russians continued to fire on her, killing and maiming several passengers, and finally discharged a torpedo and sank her. The damage done by the cowardly Russians in Eastern seas during these raids, in ships destroyed and delayed, was estimated at several millions sterling. They missed one great prize, namely, the Pacific mail steamer *Korea*, which accomplished the voyage from San Francisco safely, though she had on board a cargo of £200,000 in gold for Japan and other contraband of war.

The American Government protested against the possible seizure of American merchant ships bound for Japanese ports. The Japanese Government had just placed contracts in America for the supply of 10,000,000 lbs. of American pressed beef; and, as the Russians had declared food contraband of war, it was feared that these vessels would be seized. There were 99,000 barrels of flour belonging to the Portland Flour Milling Company on board the German steamer *Arabia*, which had been seized. The United States was not prepared to accept Russia's *dictum* as to what was and what was not contraband, and meant to supply Japan with all the food and other material she desired to purchase. American newspapers accused Russia of running *amok* "in order to bring about a general war," in which event her own position could not fail to be improved. Out of the general turmoil she might save something; at present she seemed in danger of losing everything in the Far East.

Mr. Balfour, in the House of Commons, on August 8th, said "the ground of objection to the seizure of the *Malacca* was that ships sailing from the Black Sea

under a commercial flag ought not to be transformed into cruisers. The Government," he said, "had remonstrated with the Russian Government."

But he went on to add that it should be observed that the question was entirely new, and it had been the object of the Government to prevent it from developing into one causing great strain between the two countries. The arrangement arrived at was a compromise. With regard to the *Knight Commander*, the Government adhered to the opinion that the circumstances afforded no justification for the sinking of a neutral ship, and had not withdrawn from their position in the smallest degree.

Mr. Balfour's statement did not satisfy shippers or insurance companies, who had expected the Government to issue a note to the Powers on the lines of that presented by the United States Government. The shipping industry of the United Kingdom needed much more positive protection from the Government than it had at present received. "The cry is for the methods and spirit of Palmerston; our present Government is much too ladylike." [1]

The Russian Volunteer Fleet then extended the scene of their operations to South African waters, where they stopped a British ship, the *Comedienne*. Count Lamsdorff made the presumptuous suggestion that British warships should go in search of the volunteers, and convey to them a message from the Tsar that they were to cease from stopping vessels in search of contraband of war. Our Government acted upon the suggestion, and the Admiralty issued an order on August 29th, in obedience to the command of the Russian Government, announcing that the Commander-in-Chief of the Cape squadron, in his Majesty's ship *Crescent*, and accompanied by the

[1] *The Times'* insurance correspondent.

cruisers *Forte* and *Pearl*, "was proceeding south with the object of communicating with the Russian vessels." Two other ships of our fleet, the *Barossa* and *Partridge*, were directed to scour the seas from Benguela to Simon's Bay, not on our Government's initiative, but "in order to give effect to the wishes of the Russian Government"; and a further detachment, the *St. George* and *Brilliant*, in the vicinity of Cape Verd, were also ordered to obey the request of the Russian Government. In fine, the British fleet now reappeared and straightway traversed the ocean at the wave of Count Lamsdorff's diplomatic wand.

The British taxpayers, as a body, were under the impression that our fleet should have known, from day to day, the position of the Russian volunteers; inasmuch as there was no more important work to be done than to keep in touch with those dangerous pirates by which, up to August 27, 1904, no less than thirty-nine British ships had been stopped, seized, or sunk.

On September 5th the German steamer *Kronprinz* sighted the Russian cruisers *Petersburg* and *Smolensk* coaling from a German collier near Zanzibar, within the three-mile limit. The British cruiser *Forte* approached them and presented them, not with a demand from the British nation that they should desist from their cowardly attacks on British shipping, but with the Tsar's order that they should do so. After reading the Imperial *ukase*, the volunteers promised to return to Russia forthwith, and they steamed off to sea in company with the German colliers. But other Russian volunteers still continued to molest British ships in the open sea, almost up to the day of the Dogger Bank outrage. The *Carisbrook*, of Glasgow, was stopped in the Bay of Biscay, for instance, on October 4th, by the *Terek*, and detained

for a considerable time while all her papers were being examined.

On October 25th, the day after the North Sea outrage was made public, the Tsar issued an order that the *Smolensk* and *Petersburg* were to be commissioned as regular cruisers in the Russian fleet, and to be rechristened the *Rion* and *Dnieper*; but no mention was made of the *Terek* and *Ural*.

The result of the North Sea outrage was that our warships resumed duty on the high seas. The British cruiser *Lancaster* arrived at Vigo on October 29th, and her commander had an interview with Admiral Roshdestvensky. And when the Russian ships left Vigo on the morning of Tuesday, November 1st, they left behind them Captain Clado and three other officers who might be made amenable for the purpose of inquiry into the actual occurrences on Dogger Bank on the night of the 21st and morning of the 22nd of October.

It came to light, about a month after the publication of Roshdestvensky's explanation, that a torpedo-destroyer had been purchased surreptitiously in England, and not long before the attack on the fishing-fleet—but it was for Russia, not for Japan. At the moment that Roshdestvensky was groundlessly accusing the Japanese, he must have known that his own Government had purchased, under false pretences, a torpedo-destroyer from Messrs. Yarrow and Sons, London. This boat was called the *Caroline*, and was said to possess a speed of thirty knots an hour. It was an Irish-American who effected the purchase. He represented himself as the agent of a rich American who was in search of a very fast steam yacht. Messrs. Yarrow said the only fast steam vessels they had were torpedo-destroyers, of which there were several under construction; and they asked him

ironically if one of them would be of any use to him.

"Why not?" said the Irishman. And he then and there bought one of the destroyers, paid the money down, and at once prepared the vessel for a voyage, her character being effectually concealed. On October 6th the *Caroline* sailed down the Thames at twenty-two knots an hour, followed for some distance by the river police, who saw something suspicious in the flying craft. But the destroyer outdistanced the policemen, got out to sea, reached Cuxhaven on October 8th, sailed through the Kiel Canal, reached Libau, and was there equipped for the third Baltic squadron.

CHAPTER XX

Siege of Port Arthur—Japanese bombard the Russian ships—Stoessel becomes melodramatic—Progress of the Baltic Fleet—Halt at Madagascar—Alexieff at St. Petersburg—German opinion on the war—The Zemstvos demand reform—Japanese finance, economy, and patriotism—Mutiny, riots, and coercion in Russia—Council of Ministers—Pobiedonostseff's advice to the Tsar.

OUTPOST fighting between the two great armies near Mukden still continued. On October 27th a detachment from General Kuroki's army attacked the Russian forces on "the highland of Waitaushan, and, after an obstinate resistance, drove out the enemy, capturing two machine guns." The Japanese casualties were estimated at 170, and the Russian at 200. The position captured was a most important one, being the only point which the Russians still held south of the Sha-ho; and on the following day the Russians endeavoured to recapture it, but without success. Japanese trains from Dalny were now running northwards as far as Yentai, and the Japanese were working the coal-mines at that place.

The rumours predicting Admiral Alexieff's recall were now realised; and on October 30th the Viceroy of the Far East, accompanied by his staff, left Harbin for St. Petersburg.

The centre of interest then shifted to Port Arthur, where Stoessel was becoming more melodramatic than ever. It was stated that he had sent a telegram to the

Tsar and the Russian Court in the following words: "I now bid you goodbye for ever. Port Arthur will be my grave." The reports appearing about him in some of the Continental newspapers were so moving that many of us were beginning to admire him; and, if he had died at the time, he would probably have gone down to posterity as a martyr in the cause of the Russian autocracy. One account of him said: "General Stoessel has imbued the garrison with a heroic spirit, and they are ready to prefer a glorious death to capitulation."

Stoessel himself telegraphed to the Tsar: "The enemy are bombarding vigorously with 11-inch bombs the fortifications on the north and north-east front, on the east side of the railway, and the interior of the fortress. Simultaneously they are advancing by means of trenches upon our forts. By gun and rifle fire, and by the gallant sorties of sharpshooters, our troops continue to fight heroically, in spite of fatigue and privations, of which fact I am happy to bear witness to your Majesty. We ask your blessing and that of the Empresses."

The Japanese now issued a sane and intelligible narative of the operations against Port Arthur, from August 1st to October 29th. They had never desisted from the end in view. Progress was reported from day to day. They had "gained positions from which the Russian ships could be reached by indirect fire," and they had utilised these points of vantage by concentrating their fire upon the battleships continuously from September 28th to October 8th. "Much damage was done, the *Pobieda* being hit once, the *Retvisan* four times, the *Peresviet* four times, and the *Poltava* five times. Other vessels were also damaged, and some small craft were sunk."

Mining operations had also been successfully con-

ducted. On October 25th they had undermined the counterscarps of three Russian forts; they then bombarded those forts for four days with heavy naval and siege guns, thereby dismounting and disabling the Russian artillery, and finally the forts were all captured, and held "in spite of tremendous efforts by the enemy to recapture them." The bombardment was exceptionally heavy on October 30th, the Japanese troops using siege guns of various calibres. At 1 p.m. the besiegers advanced, and by sunset had occupied the crests and glacis of the three forts. Simultaneously another part of Nogi's army charged against a fourth stronghold, capturing it in spite of the enemy's heavy fire. "We then formed entrenchments," says General Nogi. "During the night, however, the enemy made several counter-attacks, one of which, at 10.30 p.m., drove our men out of the fort; but Major-General Ichinohe himself led the firing lines, and at 11 p.m. recaptured the fort, which from that time was firmly held."

Other forts were also taken. The heavy siege guns continued to play upon the harbour, sinking the Russian shipping, setting the wharves on fire, and causing several powder magazines to explode. In one of the forts captured the Japanese found three field guns, two machine guns, three fish-torpedoes, and forty Russian dead bodies. Day after day, from October 29th to November 3rd, the Japanese heavy guns thus continued to batter the defences of Port Arthur and the shipping in the harbour.

A Russian destroyer, the *Rastoropni*, said to be the fastest in the fleet, and which, it will be remembered, sank the British steamer *Hipsang* in July, escaped from Port Arthur with despatches on November 16th, and ran into Chifu, at the opposite side of the Straits of Pechili. The Japanese pursued her, and remained on

guard at the entrance to the port; but the Russians, having delivered the despatches, deserted their ship, and, by igniting a slow fuse, blew up the *Rastoropni*. Her officers went into hiding, and, disguised as German supercargoes, sought to escape in a coasting steamer, but the vessel was seized by the Japanese, and they surrendered themselves as prisoners of war.

On October 28th and 30th some incoherent accounts of the Japanese bombardment were published from Stoessel; and on November 3rd he sent the Tsar the following telegram, which probably marks the climax of the Stoessel siege literature:—

"Great Tsar! To-day, a day of solemn import for all our country, we pray to God, and with a resounding hurrah we congratulate our Tsar. We pray and beseech God to grant good health unto your Majesty, unto their Majesties the Empresses, and unto the Grand Duke the Tsarevitch. Our joy is the greater because all the assaults and attacks, which have lasted nine days, have been repulsed this day—the great day, the anniversary of your accession to the throne—the same day on which our enemies, the Japanese, are celebrating the anniversary of the birth of their Mikado, the day on which they had sworn to take the fortress! God is with us!"

The bare publication of such a telegram pronounces its own censure upon Stoessel, the Tsar, and the Russian autocracy. Every line of it bears witness to the fact that court favouritism is the one channel to promotion in the Russian army and navy, as well as in the civil service. It is the telegram of a practised flatterer, from whom no great deed could ever be expected. Stoessel is also alleged to have informed the Tsar that Port Arthur could hold out for seven months.

Whilst Stoessel was thus boasting and flattering and

praying, it is interesting to note the progress of the large Russian fleet which was on its way to relieve Port Arthur. At Tangier the Baltic Fleet divided. Roshdestvensky with the best battleships was to go south by way of the Cape; Folkersahm with the older ships was to go by the Mediterranean. Folkersahm's detachment reached Crete on November 5th, and on that day Roshdestvensky sailed southward from Tangier, bound for Dakar, in French West Africa. Four Russian volunteers, the *Yaroslav*, *Veronezh*, *Tamboff*, and *Vladimir*, passed through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and steamed into the Mediterranean to meet Folkersahm. On the 16th Roshdestvensky sailed from Dakar. On the 17th the last division of the Baltic Fleet, consisting of five cruisers, of which three were the transformed volunteers, *Smolensk*, *Peterburg*, and *Terek*, sailed from Libau.

Three German transports supplied Folkersahm's division with provisions and coal at Crete, and the detachment sailed from Canea on November 21st. "The conduct of the sailors of the Baltic Fleet during their stay here was extremely disagreeable," says an eye-witness in Canea.[1] There were constant scenes of drunkenness and brawling, in which officers, as well as men, took part. One Russian sailor was killed by his comrades. "Some drunken seamen stripped their clothes off in the principal square of Canea." If a lady appeared at a window, the door of the house was broken in, and the assaults of drunken sailors had to be repelled by force. Ladies passing through the streets had to take refuge in the churches. The Russian detachment of occupation and the local *gendarmerie* were quite unable to control the intoxicated blue-jackets, and many of them were left behind, having lost their way or deserted.

[1] *The Times*' correspondent.

It was now stated that the priest on board the cruiser *Aurora* had been wounded on the night of the Dogger Bank outrage, and had died at Tangier. The obvious explanation was that the shells which struck the warship were those which her own consorts had aimed at the defenceless fishermen.

Folkersahm's division of the Baltic Fleet arrived at Port Said on November 24th, and completed the passage of the Suez Canal on the 26th. On December 14th it sailed from Jibutil in French Somaliland, opposite Aden, and apparently went to meet Roshdestvensky, whose squadron, having left Dakar, next coaled at Libreville in French Congo, and passed Cape Town on December 19th proceeding eastward, and ultimately reached French Madagascar, where it made a prolonged stay and evinced no inclination to hasten to the theatre of war.

Alexieff had, meanwhile, arrived at St. Petersburg on November 10th, after a passage across the continent by the Trans-Siberian Railway. He gave interviews to the correspondents of several French newspapers, representing Russia's creditors. He denied that there had ever been any ill-feeling between him and Kuropatkin; he had never "proffered any strategic or tactical counsel to the generalissimo, who bore the full responsibility for all his acts"; it was not he who had composed Kuropatkin's address to the troops; it was not he who had ordered the naval sortie on August 10th; he was not in disagreement with the admirals any more than with Kuropatkin. And, finally, the war in Manchuria was a war of race and religion, which, in Alexieff's opinion, would only be a prelude to several others of the same kind! In a word, virtuous and civilised Russia was fighting the battle of the white man and of Christ in the Far East!

Alexieff's opinion on race and religion did not carry

much weight with the French creditors. If France was in search of a rational judgment on the war, it was supplied to them in Germany, a few days after Alexieff's declaration. The Germans were entirely with Russia and against Japan. Russia offers a vast field for expansion to Germany; the Russians are incompetent, and most of their skilled work and remunerative trading is done by the Germans. But Japan requires no assistance, and the German view is that "Japanese competition is becoming a serious danger to German trade in East Asia." Herr Woas, just returned from the Far East, delivered a lecture in Berlin on November 19th. He deprecated "the ubiquitous activity of the Japanese traders, who were to be met with not only on the coast of China, but in the interior and on every river." They had even invaded Shantung. The German lecturer alluded to that great province as "our Shantung," and the applause with which his remarks were greeted showed that he had the unanimous approval of the meeting and its chairman, Duke Johann Albrecht, of Mecklenburg. "No one was more directly threatened by the present war than the Germans." The war was not one of race and religion, "but was solely the work of the commercial and industrial classes in Japan."

Captain Von Pustau, lecturing on the war and its consequences for Germany at the German Navy League, on November 25th, said that he had had an interview at Reval with Admiral Roshdestvensky, whom he regarded "as a clever man with a clear purpose." If the Baltic Fleet succeeded in effecting a junction with the ships now in Port Arthur, Russia would have a preponderance in powerful battleships. "Everything depended upon the fate of Port Arthur!"

Even Russian public opinion, inchoate as it is, was

not imposed upon by Alexieff's pretence of a religious war, or Stoessel's fawning telegrams to the Tsar and the two Empresses. The Zemstvos, which are the district and provincial assemblies, corresponding, in a limited degree, to our rural and urban councils—being elected by the peasantry, townsfolk, and landed proprietors—now proposed to hold a conference to discuss various projects of reform in the system of government in Russia. The Zemstvo system is in force in thirty-four Russian provinces, and the members had been doubtless emboldened to take this course by the defeats inflicted on the armies in Manchuria.

The Government now withdrew the permission given to the Zemstvos to hold their conference. The delegates therefore held private meetings, and the first of these meetings, on November 21st, was attended by thirty-two presidents of provincial Zemstovs, out of a total of thirty-four.

"You are surprised that we claim freedom for the people!" exclaimed one of the presidents, who, like most of them, was a landed proprietor. "It is not out of philanthropy, but because we feel the imperative necessity of including the people in our social life in order to avoid a revolution. Agrarian riots have already begun in the provinces of Ekaterinoslaff, of Kieff, and others, the pretext being the departure of the reservists. The landlords have been threatened with a demand for contributions. As we are landlords ourselves, and would be the first to suffer from a revolution, we take time by the forelock and demand of the Government permission for the people to discuss the measures suitable to improve their lot."

Resolutions were unanimously passed "expressing regret for the lack of confidence between the Government and Russian society, as represented by the

Zemstvos, and urging closer relationship"; in favour of "a constitution giving the people elected representatives endowed with legislative rights"; in favour of "complete liberty of conscience, of the Press, of association, and of meeting." They applied for "the emancipation of the Zemstvos from governmental and administrative tutelage," and formulated a demand for "the education of the people," who should be allowed to be their own masters "in superintending efficaciously their interests and their rights."

No better proof could be adduced of the hollowness of Nicholas's professions to the deputation of newspaper men, at the beginning of the war, than the fact that the Russian papers were forbidden to even mention the occurrence of those meetings of the Zemstvos, although reports of them were freely circulated amongst Russia's creditors in France.

Let us contrast the internal economy of Russia with that of Japan. The Japanese Diet was opened on November 30th, and the Mikado, in his speech from the throne, said: "Our expeditionary forces have been victorious in every engagement, and by displaying an increased brilliancy of valour have secured steady progress in the situation. Placing full confidence in the loyalty and devotion of our subjects, we expect that the ultimate object of the war will be attained, and we trust that you will endeavour, in compliance with our will, to discharge with harmonious co-operation the duty which is incumbent upon you."

The Mikado could appeal with confidence to the loyalty of the people. Count Katsura said: "With us the war means life and death, and not one of our forty-five million brethren remains ignorant of the vital issues at stake. We are prepared to sacrifice the last man and the last yen in the war."

What European statesman could have made such

a pronouncement in reference to his "brethren," the electorate, with respect to any public question concerning his own country at that moment?

Count Katsura said wisely that, though everything seemed to hinge on the fall of Port Arthur, he did not console himself with the thought that the capture of that ill-fated fortress would bring the war to a speedy termination. "Its capture," said Count Katsura, "will afford Russia an opportunity of initiating a renewed plan of warfare. I am watching keenly for new developments in the enemy's plan of campaign."

It would have been well for the most civilised nation in Europe if its statesmen consistently displayed the same degree of prudence as Katsura; it would be well even for the United Kingdom if our Government could as truly call the British electorate their "brethren." The next statement of the Japanese premier recalls the golden times of the early Roman Republic: "The domestic conditions of Japan," says Count Katsura, "are highly satisfactory. With the great problem of the war before us, our nation becomes as one man. We have no war party and no peace party as Russia has. The Japanese nation is one united body in its determination to fight to the last extremity. Every domestic loan has been over-subscribed. I confess the results exceeded our expectations. This may be explained by the fact that our people maintain a calm attitude and diligently pursue their occupations. They continue their frugal habits and have sacrificed no productive energy. Our crops this year exceed the average value by £10,000,000. Our foreign trade shows an improvement as compared with last year, and is expected to reach a total of £70,000,000. The prices of commodities have slightly increased, but the financial and economic conditions remain unaffected. This has probably surprised the

enemy, for it exceeds our own expectations. We are redoubling our energies and are working diligently, living frugally, and going forward with the war unhesitatingly."

The total war budget presented to the Lower House of the Diet amounted to £78,000,000, but that figure included provision for the interest on outstanding loans. It would be necessary in 1905 to borrow only £45,000,000, because the *economies in the ordinary expenditure* permitted the diversion of £12,000,000 to the war fund. The war and ordinary budgets together gave a total of about £100,000,000.

What a contrast this candid and modest statement presents to the praying and flattering and boasting, the untruth, equivocation, and cowardliness of the public pronouncements which emanated from those in authority on the Russian side!

The Tsar despatched an address to be read at the opening of the Finnish Diet on December 9th, and the God on Earth took credit to himself for his gracious condescension in having summoned its members to meet.

"By convening you to assemble in ordinary session of the Diet," he said, "I have given a new proof of my confidence in the Finnish population."

"With sorrow, however, I observe that public tranquillity in Finland has been shaken by resistance to my decrees, and the past summer was darkened by the murder of the highest representative of the Imperial Power in Finland. The measures enacted for the suppression of resistance to the laws which unite the Empire and the Grand Duchy of Finland, have only a temporary character, and will be abolished by me joyfully as soon as the Governor-General announces that the causes for these measures have ceased to exist. Other laws, such as the Imperial Manifesto of February 15, 1899, and of June 20,

1900, dealing with the use of the Russian language in the Finnish Senate, and that of July 12, 1901, dealing with military service, will, as regards their main principles, remain in force; but I have had new measures framed for the purpose of limiting the application of these laws, appreciating the remonstrances made regarding them by my Finnish Senate. I pray God to enlighten your minds and to bestow His blessing on your labours!—NICHOLAS."

Of all the Protestant peoples in Europe, the Finns are perhaps one of the most lovable and highly educated. But their country is subject to a *régime* of brutal coercion by the Russians. Their language is suppressed and they are compelled to speak the jargon of Russia; they are forced by conscription to join the Russian army; they are prevented from emigrating, and exiled if they do so; but, in spite of all that Russian barbarity can inflict upon them, they have attained to a degree of intellectual pre-eminence unexcelled in North Europe.

A riot took place in St. Petersburg on Sunday, December 11th, a great crowd having assembled in the Nevsky Prospect, crying, "Down with the Autocracy!" "Stop the War!" But they were dispersed by the police and 180 arrests were made. The sailors of the Russian Black Sea Fleet broke out in open mutiny, and it was stated that about 8,000 men participated in the outbreak. The garrison at Sevastopol was commanded to fire on the mutineers, but the troops refused to do so; and the disturbances were quelled by a mixture of priestly ritual, the dungeon, and the knout, but no lasting peace was thus secured.

Nicholas now summoned a council of ministers, the proceedings at which were suffered to leak out and were reported at some length in the French newspapers, for the information of Russia's allies and creditors.

M. Mouravieff, Minister of Justice, made a flattering speech, in which he pointed out that the Tsar was not legally entitled "to upset the political *régime* of the Empire." The courtly flatterer, we are told, relied upon "texts of laws, ukases, decrees, and ordinances, promulgated since the time of Peter the Great."

Prince Sviatopolk-Mirski, Minister of the Interior, replied that "the Tsar constantly promulgated new laws, whereas, if the opinion of the Minister of Justice prevailed, his Majesty would be logically obliged to abandon all legislative action." The Prince went on to say, "The question is not of an academic nature, but is one that concerns the measures to be taken in presence of a given political situation. Can the present situation be prolonged without danger? I do not believe it can. Your Majesty will graciously solve this essential problem—namely, whether the drawbacks of maintaining the *status quo* are more considerable than those that would attend the introduction of certain reforms, and notably the abolition of passports, freedom of the Press, and the admission to the council of the Empire of elected representatives of the Zemstvos."[1]

Nicholas seemed undecided and asked for the opinion of M. Kokovzov, Minister of Finance, who expressed a contrary opinion to that of Prince Sviatopolk-Mirski.

M. Witte sided with the Prince, and "demonstrated the impossibility of dispensing with vast economic and political reforms."

Opinion so far seemed evenly divided, when M. Pobiedonostseff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, arose. This man is described as "that evil genius of Russia who was one of the promotors of the reactionary and intolerant system inaugurated by Alexander III., and who took a part in the education of the present Tsar."[2]

[1] *Matin.* [2] *The Times.*

Pobiedonostseff agreed with Mouravieff and Kokovzov. He is censured for doing so. Why should he be censured? "Russia is the Tsar. The Tsar is Russia. The Synod belongs to the Pope; and the Pope is the Tsar, and the Tsar is the God on Earth." [1]

Nicholas is the Holy Tsar of Russia. "He himself has commanded that He should be so called; for no subject can give Him honour and titles. He alone can confer them upon Himself. And, therefore, is He known as *Zembla Bogh, The God on Earth, The Pope of the Greek Church, The Master and Maker of the Holy Synod, The Adjuster of the Earth, The Peace and Goodwill on Earth.*" [1]

Nicholas occupies a position in many respects analogous to that of Kwang-Su. Both are equally omnipotent; both are equally impotent. Both are for a testimony to this twentieth century that man should not set himself up to be a God.

Pobiedonostseff's speech is worthy of note: "The Tsar is not only Emperor but Pope of the Orthodox Church, and his duty is to be inspired by not only political considerations, but, above all, by religious motives. If the Tsar abandoned the autocracy in favour of a national representation, would not the Church lose its head? And, since the Church is based on Divine authority, if the Tsar consented to surrender a portion of his own authority, would not the Church lose its authority also? Would not religion be then weakened, and, with it, would not the exclusive source of morality—namely, the moral conscience of the people—vanish?"

If we may interrupt the Holy Procurator for a moment, may we remind him that the Church in Russia stands in danger of "losing its head," in the most literal and sanguinary sense of the word, as

[1] *Russia As It Really Is*, by Carl Joubert.

Laud lost his head in England, and as leaders of the Church frequently lost their heads in friendly France? May we also remind him that all the facts go to show that the Church in Russia is, perhaps, best described as "the exclusive source of immorality," and that there is no such thing in Russia as a "moral conscience," and that the worst type of immorality is that which is practised by Gods on Earth and Procurators of Holy Synods?

Pobiedonostseff went on to say that if the Church were interfered with, "the people would fall back into barbarism and sin." But, M. Pobiedonostseff, the people are at present "in barbarism and sin," and it is you and your Church and your God on Earth who keep them chained therein! The Procurator is a theologian and argued thus: "The surrender of autocracy would be an infraction of Divine law. How could the abandonment of a Divine and consequently eternal institution, in presence of mere passing difficulties, be justified before the Tsar's successors?"

The God on Earth wavered, as he thought of the boy-baby in the Imperial nursery, sixteen pounds weight by this time! Pobiedonostseff and his reactionary colleagues began to breathe easily.

"It is the duty of the Sovereign Emperor," exclaimed the Procurator, "to defend morals and religion, and he must leave to *his descendants* the Divine heritage undiminished by the influence of impious tendencies. The Sovereign Emperor, in virtue of his religious quality, has no right to upset of his own initiative the institution he represents."

M. Witte said mordantly: "If it became known that legally and religiously the Sovereign Emperor is not in a position to give fundamental reforms of his own accord, a portion of the people would think

that in that case they could obtain it by force. It would be a challenge to revolution."

There we must leave Nicholas and his ministers. Revolutionary crowds were singing choruses in the street. Professional men, forbidden to hold meetings, were assembling at dinner parties in the great restaurants, and demanding a constitution. But Nicholas, in the nursery with the baby-God-on-Earth, could not hear them any more than if he were Kwang-Su bemoaning his own impotence in the innermost recesses of the harem in the Forbidden City.

CHAPTER XXI

Narrative of the final months of the siege of Port Arthur—Stoessel's telegrams—The capitulation—The prisoners—Meeting between Nogi and Stoessel—Stoessel's return to Europe.

PITEOUS and boastful telegrams were beginning to come again from Stoessel: "The Japanese, from November 20th to 24th, lost more than 2,000 men. All our troops behaved as heroes"! And again: "November 26th to 27th were the bloodiest days in the assaults on Port Arthur. The help which God sent us in the birthday of our mother, the Tsaritza, gave us a further victory"! And again: "The twelve days' assault which commenced on November 20th was definitely repulsed last night. I am happy to say that the heroic troops of your Majesty alone could have been capable of doing this. There has never been such a fierce assault. The Japanese, according to prisoners and Chinese, lost at least 20,000 men. We request your prayers and those of the Mother Empresses, which are manifestly shielding us. As General Aide-de-Camp to your Majesty I have expressed your Majesty's thanks to the garrison"! Then follows a telegram on December 5th, stating that the Japanese had taken possession of Vissokoya Hill; and on December 6th, that the ships in the harbour were suffering from 11-inch Japanese shells, and that General Tserpinsky had succumbed to his wounds.

On November 29th the Japanese attacked 203 Metre

Hill, and, after several assaults, occupied the enemy's trenches near the top. In the fierce fighting General Nogi's second son was amongst the slain. His eldest son had been already killed at Nanshen, it will be remembered, and he was now childless. Instead of feeling aggrieved, the great soldier felt highly honoured, and even rejoiced, at having been privileged to devote his two sons to the service of Japan.

The fighting had been of such a desperate character that a truce was called: "Hostilities were suspended on the left flank of the Japanese army at Port Arthur from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on December 2nd, for the purpose of dealing with the dead and wounded on both sides."

But there was to be no real cessation until Port Arthur was taken. "The guns of the Japanese ships opened fire on the Russian ships on December 3rd. The *Pobieda* was struck six times, and a ship like the *Retvisan* eight times, while others were struck sixteen times." The same guns opened fire on December 5th, "when the *Pobieda* was hit seven times, the *Poltava* eleven times, and the *Retvisan* eleven times." A Russian powder magazine exploded, which was followed by a conflagration. On the same day the heavy siege guns on shore cannonaded the ships. "The *Peresvict* was struck twice, and in a ship resembling the *Poltava* a fire occurred and violent flames were visible for about an hour."

Russian guns and forts continued to be captured. On December 7th the Japanese drove the Russians from a height called Red Hill, being enabled to do so by means of the advantage gained in the capture of 203 Metre Hill. On the same day they also dislodged the Russians from two heights at the north side of Port Arthur.

The Japanese naval brigade, from their post of

observation on 203 Metre Hill, were distinctly able to count the hits made by their own guns on the Russian warships — *Pobieda*, 34; *Retvisan* or *Pallada*, 32; *Poltava*, 11; besides 50 others. They could see the *Bayan* and other ships aground. On December 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th the Japanese heavy siege guns continued to play remorselessly on the Russian warships. A more pitiable spectacle is not recorded than that of these great Russian ships, fitted with the newest possible machinery and fighting gear, having returned to Port Arthur against the express orders of the Emperor, and now lying helpless, after four months in harbour, while they are being slowly battered to pieces by the Japanese guns. If they had been manned by seamen of any other white race, it is impossible to doubt that they would have issued forth and fought to the death rather than bear such ignominy.

The battleship *Sevastopol* was lying outside the harbour under shelter of the hills, and therefore out of range of the heavy siege guns on 203 Metre Hill. On December 12th two Japanese torpedo-boats rushed upon her, under a vigorous fire from the battleship, launched their torpedoes, and retired, leaving the *Sevastopol* in such a condition that "her repair was hopeless, and she was certainly unfit to fight or navigate."

On December 11th Stoessel telegraphed: "All the vessels in the inner roadstead have been sunk from High Hill, occupied by the Japanese, by means of 11-inch shells, with the exception of the *Sevastopol*, which, under the command of Captain Essen, proceeded to the outer roadstead, and which for four nights has repulsed the attacks of the torpedo-boats . . . We have very few officers. Two hundred fell during October and November. I am filling their places by appointing sergeant-majors and non-commissioned officers, who are doing heroic service. I could not have got on

without them." One would have thought no apology was needed for promoting men from the ranks at such a crisis.

The complete destruction of the Russian fleet having been reported by Admiral Togo, the great sailor was summoned home to Tokio to take measures for handling the Baltic Fleet, if and when it should appear in Eastern waters. Admiral Kamimura left the seat of war also, and accompanied his chief to the Japanese capital, where the distinguished sailors were met, on their arrival at the railway station, by the Presidents of both Houses of Parliament, and an address from the House of Representatives was presented to Admiral Togo. A powerful squadron of Japanese cruisers was placed under the command of Admiral Kamimura, and despatched soon afterwards to the China Sea to meet Roshdestvensky, who showed no eagerness to advance.

On December 13th Stoessel telegraphed to the Tsar complaining that his principal medical officer had been wounded in the discharge of his duty. "I wrote to General Nogi, commanding the Japanese army," he said, "concerning acts so contrary to the laws of warfare." As if Nogi had intentionally aimed at the Russian doctor! But Stoessel adds in characteristic style: "The spirits of the splendid troops entrusted to my care are as high as ever." The "splendid troops" were being chased from position after position at the time he sent this telegram, yet they were in high spirits! The Japanese had just captured the Vycokaia Mountain, and Stoessel absurdly suggests that General Nogi maliciously trained his guns from that position on the pestiferous Russian hospitals, in which all was dirt and incompetence! One does not hear the Japanese complaining that their admirably-managed hospitals and superb medical staff were interfered with by the Russian guns.

On December 16th Stoessel wired: "At nine o'clock yesterday evening an 11-inch shell fell on Fort, No. 3 and killed heroes in the casemate of whom we were proud—namely, General Kondrachenko, Lieutenant-Colonel Naumenko, Colonel Hashevski, Captain Zidhenidze, Lieutenant Senkevitch, Captains Trikovski and Savitski, and Ensigns Smolianinoff and Neieloff. Seven other officers were wounded. The death of General Kondrachenko has produced a most painful impression." Kondrachenko appears to have been the moving spirit of the defenders.

Some Russian refugees from Port Arthur reached Chifu in a Chinese junk on December 16th. One of them, Count Mizzenoff, had been wounded in the fight at 203 Metre Hill: "The Japanese were compelled to clamber up the steep slopes," he said, "in many cases without themselves firing a shot, in the face of one of the most murderous deluges ever poured from rifles and machine guns. I was there," added the Count, "and it seemed that no flesh and blood could stand our fire even for a minute. The enemy went down in squads and companies, but there were always others coming on and pressing unwaveringly forward." The refugees recounted an incident illustrating the difference in stature between the Russians and their conquerors: "When the Japanese standard-bearer reached the summit and planted the flag, a gigantic Russian corporal left his retreating comrades, rushed back, and seized the flag, which he was tearing with his hands and teeth, when he fell pierced by seven bullets."

On December the 15th and 16th an interchange of notes took place between Stoessel and General Nogi, originating in the complaint of Stoessel's that the Japanese shots were striking the Russian hospitals; and Stoessel made the preposterous request that the

Japanese "should refrain from firing on the whole of the new town and the north-east quarter of the old town!" It is only a Russian diplomatist who could have made such a proposal to General Nogi; but then Stoessel was in desperate straits; and, despite his protestations to the Tsar that he would die in Port Arthur, was seeking an opportunity for getting into communication with the Japanese General.

On December 18th Stoessel telegraphed: "The spirits of the defenders are unexampled. All are heroes!" On that day the parapet of the principal north fort of Port Arthur was blown up. "Forthwith our troops charged in," says General Nogi, "and a severe fight with hand grenades ensued. The enemy made a most stubborn resistance, and the fire of his machine-guns temporarily checked the progress of our attack. At 7 p.m. Lieutenant-General Samejima himself, leading the reserves into the counter-scarp gallery, advanced into the fighting-line, and a last great charge resulted in a capture of the fort at 11.50 p.m. We immediately entrenched and established our position firmly by morning." The Japanese captured nine quick-firing and four machine guns, 161 rifles, 2,201 rounds of gun ammunition, 15,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 80 grenades and nine star shells, from the self-styled Russian "heroes."

On December 20th Stoessel telegraphed that he had ordered his troops to retreat from Fort No. 2, and he adds: "The ammunition is coming to an end. The defenders are showing a bold front. I have at present, including sailors, in all about 12,000 men for the defence of the fortress." These statements, as we shall see, were all at variance with the facts.

On December 23rd the Japanese captured a hill situated one mile and a half nearer to Port Arthur than 203 Metre Hill, and on Christmas Day they con-

tinued the attack, dislodging the Russians from their outposts in every direction.

Kuropatkin's intelligence department at Mukden knew so little of these occurrences that, on December 22nd, the strategist telegraphed to the Tsar: "Chinese report that the Port Arthur garrison has succeeded in recapturing 203 Metre Hill with the guns placed there by the enemy"!

This was the beginning of the end for Stoessel. General Fock was wounded, and it was reported that Stoessel himself had fallen from his horse and received some injuries.

On December 28th it was evident that he was contemplating immediate surrender. The Tsar seems to have been aware of it, for he published a list of casualties which Stoessel had enclosed in his despatch: "The tale of losses of higher officers is an indication of the enormous losses which we have sustained," he said. Of ten generals two had been killed, one had died, Stoessel and another had been wounded, not very seriously as it turned out, and another general was "suffering from contusions." There were still seven full-fledged generals to command the operations. Of the nine regimental commanders two were killed and two died of wounds, leaving five still remaining. Of eight commanders of field batteries one had been killed and some others wounded. "The percentage of other superior officers," says Stoessel, "who were killed or died of disease, or were wounded several times, is enormous."

On December 28th and 29th the Japanese occupied the entire fort of Uurlungshan, the most important of the remaining outer defences of Port Arthur, capturing 4 large-calibre guns, 7 smaller guns, and 32 other cannon. On December 31st the Japanese army, "according to plan, blew up the parapet of

Sungshushan and obtained secure possession of the whole fort." Over 153 Russians were smothered, but the Japanese saved two officers and 160 Russian soldiers from the *débris*.

Stoessel had now abandoned the idea of dying in Port Arthur! On the following day, December 29th, he sent a telegram finally preparing the Tsar for his surrender: "We will only hold out a few days longer. We have hardly any ammunition left. I shall take measures to prevent carnage in the streets." The implication was that the Japanese would be guilty of the crime of butchering the Russians! All those unveracious statements were but so many rods which Stoessel was cutting wherewith to beat himself when all the naked truth should be disclosed at a date then only a few days distant. "Scurvy is weakening the garrison sensibly," he goes on. "I have now 10,000 men under arms. They are all ill. Generals Fock and Nitikin are real heroes and real comrades."

The Japanese were now expecting the fall of Port Arthur at any moment. The steamship *Manshu Maru* sailed from Yokohama on December 26th, having on board ten foreign *attachés*, four members of the Japanese House of Peers, seventeen members of the House of Representatives, and a secretary of the Diet.

On the last day of the year 1904, Admiral Togo attended a funeral service at Tokio held in memory of a number of officers and men who were killed at Port Arthur while serving under him. The admiral read an eulogy of the dead sailors which was in every sense of the word a most remarkable document: "As I stand before your spirits I can hardly express my feelings," said the famous sailor. "Your personality is fresh in my memory. Your corporeal existence has ceased, but your passing from the world has been in the gallant discharge of your duty, by virtue of which

the enemy's fleet on this side of the world has been completely disabled. Our combined fleet retains the undisputed command of the seas. I trust that this will bring peace and rest to your spirits. It is my agreeable duty to avail myself of the occasion of my presence in this city, whither I have been called by the Emperor, to report our successes to the spirits of those who sacrificed their earthly existence for the attainment of so great a result. The report is rendered most humbly by me in person, Heihachiro Togo, Admiral of the Combined Fleets."

On the same day in Port Arthur the Russian soldiers, having heard that a surrender was in contemplation, "looted a store containing 5,000 bottles of vodka. . . . There were terrible orgies in the streets. The troops sent to quell the disturbances joined the revellers."[1] Thus closed the eventful year 1904, with celebrations suited to the temperament of each of the combatants.

Daybreak on Sunday, January 1, 1905, found Stoessel pen in hand. One of his telegrams is as follows: "After two hours' bombardment the Japanese assaulted the Chinese wall, extending from Number 3 Fort to Eagle's Nest Fort. Two assaults were repulsed, our field artillery doing much damage to the Japanese. It being impossible to maintain our hold of the Chinese wall, I ordered our troops last night to retire upon the hills behind the wall, leaving our right flank on the high hill. The greater part of the eastern front is in the hands of the Japanese. We shall not be able to hold our new positions long, and *when they fall we shall have to capitulate.*" "The commander of Number 3 Fort, Captain Seradoff, perished in the explosion. The Japanese fired mines, resulting in tremendous explosions under Fort

[1] *The Times'* correspondent with General Nogi's army.

Number 3, and immediately thereafter opened an infernal bombardment along the whole line."

It is now, perhaps, that the real man, Stoessel, displays himself, and in doing so discloses to us the true Russian character: "But everything is in the hands of God!" he exclaims. "We have suffered great losses. Two regimental commanders, Gandourine and Semenoff, are wounded, the hero Gandourine very seriously." "But everything is in the hands of God"! By this expression he evidently meant the God on Earth, for he goes on to say, "Great Sovereign! Forgive! We have done all that was humanly possible. Judge us, but be merciful. Eleven months of ceaseless fighting have exhausted our strength. A quarter only of the defenders, and one-half of these invalids, occupy twenty-seven versts of fortifications (eighteen miles) without support and without intervals for even the briefest repose. The men are reduced to shadows."

These howlings of Stoessel, as we shall see, did not correspond with the facts.

Forts continued to be captured now almost from hour to hour. The new fort of Panlungshan, and another fort called H Fort, were captured on the morning of January 1, 1905. Numbers of guns were taken that day. From 9 a.m. the Japanese centre and left attacked the Wantai Fort, pushed home their charge, and captured it at half-past three, fourteen Russian guns being taken. Stoessel was now being driven to the end of his burrow.

Towards the evening of Sunday, January 1st, Stoessel saw that all his tricks had failed him, and he indicted a humble letter to General Nogi offering to surrender the fortress, "being convinced of the uselessness of continuing the destruction of life," and asking his humane conqueror to fix a place of meeting

to discuss the terms of surrender. No mention of the holy Tsar, the God on Earth, or of the two Empresses are to be found in this humble note. Stoessel had become a sadder and a wiser man, and knew now, as he had never known it, that it is "deeds, not words," that are required from a soldier. It was nine o'clock p.m. when General Nogi received Stoessel's letter: "At 9 p.m. on January 1st," he says modestly, "I received a letter from General Stoessel with reference to the surrender of Port Arthur."

General Nogi, at Stoessel's request, fixed the hour of noon on the following day, Monday, January 2, 1905, for the meeting. Nogi informed the Mikado, and the Japanese sovereign telegraphed in reply, through Marshal Yamagata, Chief of the Staff: "When I reported to the Emperor General Stoessel's proposal to evacuate the fortress his Majesty expressed high appreciation of the loyalty and endurance displayed by General Stoessel on behalf of his country, and desired that all the honours of war should be extended to him."

During the night of Sunday, January 1st, there were two explosions followed by "a confused rifle fire" from the Russian side. The Japanese advanced and discovered that two important forts had been blown up and evacuated. As the morning of January 2nd wore on, explosion after explosion resounded from Port Arthur. The Russians were engaged in their favourite work of destruction. "This morning," says General Nogi, "the enemy blew up almost all their craft, large and small, warships and steamers, in the harbour and the harbour mouth." The Japanese meantime suspended all operations pending the conference to be held at noon.

The memorable meeting took place at the village of

Shuishi, and lasted from 1 p.m. till 8 p.m., the Russian delegates being five in number—Colonel Reiss, Chief of the Staff, Surgeon-General Balasheff, Colonel Vostock, and two other Staff officers; the Japanese delegates being only three in number—Major-General Ijichi, Chief of the Staff, Major Gamaoka, and Doctor Ariga; and there were two interpreters on each side. The capitulation was signed there and then, for the Russians were not in a position to break off the negotiations. The time had passed for deception, or, in other words, for Russian diplomacy.

But the Japanese took no unfair advantage of the beaten condition of their opponents, as the full text of the terms of the capitulation will show. The clearness and comprehensiveness of the treaty of surrender are quite in keeping with the business-like habits of the conquerors. Every contingency is provided for in the most masterly and far-seeing fashion:—

"1. All Russian soldiers, marines, and volunteers, also Government officials at Port Arthur garrison and harbour are taken prisoners.

"2. All forts, batteries, warships, and other ships, boats, arms, and ammunition, and horses, and all materials, all Government buildings, and all objects belonging to the Government shall be transferred to the Japanese army in their existing condition.

"3. On the preceding two conditions being assented to, and as a guarantee for the same, the garrisons of the forts and batteries of Itsushan, Shaoantsushan, Taantsushan, and the line of eminences south-east therefrom, shall be removed by noon on the 3rd inst., and the same shall be transferred to the Japanese army.

"4. Should the Russian military and naval men be deemed to have destroyed the objects named in Article 2, or to have caused an alteration in any way in their condition as existing at the time of the signing of the

compact, the negotiation shall be annulled, and the Japanese army will take free action.

"5. The Russian military and naval authorities shall prepare and transfer to the Japanese army a table showing the fortifications at Port Arthur and their respective positions; maps showing the location of the mines underground and submarine and all other dangerous objects; also a table showing the composition and system of the army and naval services of Port Arthur; a list of the army and naval officers, with the name, rank, and duties of the officers; a list of the army steamers, warships, and other ships, with the numbers of the crews; a list of the civilians, showing the number of men and women and their race and occupation.

"6. Arms, including those carried on the person, ammunition, war materials, Government buildings, objects owned by Government, horses, warships and other ships, including their contents, excepting private property, shall be left in their present positions, and commissioners of the Russian and Japanese armies shall decide as to the method of their transfer.

"7. The Japanese army, considering the gallant resistance offered by the Russian army honourable, will permit the officers of the Russian army and navy, as well as the officials belonging thereto, to carry their swords and take with them private property directly necessary for the maintenance of life. The previously mentioned officers, officials, and volunteers, who will sign a written parole pledging their word that they will not take arms and will in no wise take action contrary to the interests of the Japanese army until the close of the war, will receive the consent of the Japanese army to return to their country. Each army and navy officer will be allowed one servant, such servant to be specially released on signing his parole.

"8. Non-commissioned officers and privates of both the army and navy and of volunteers shall wear their uniforms, and, taking their portable tents and necessary private property and commanded by their respective officers, shall assemble at such place as may be indicated by the Japanese army. The Japanese commissioners will indicate the necessary details for this.

"9. The sanitary corps and accountants belonging to the Russian army and navy shall be retained by the Japanese while their services are deemed necessary for the purpose of caring for the sick and wounded prisoners. During such time such corps are required to render service under the direction of the sanitary corps and accountants of the Japanese army.

"10. The treatment to be accorded to residents, the transfer of books and documents relating to municipal administrations and finance, and also the detailed files necessary for the enforcement of the provisions of this compact, shall be embodied in a supplementary compact, the supplement to have the same force as this compact.

"11. One copy each of this compact shall be prepared for the Japanese and Russian armies, and shall have immediate effect upon signature."

The delegates then separated and returned to their respective quarters. Four Russian torpedo-destroyers escaped from Port Arthur on the night of the surrender, and ran into Chifu, but three large Japanese destroyers followed them into the port, where they were disarmed. Two Russian torpedo-boats arrived at Kiao-Chau, and were also disarmed.

On the night of Tuesday, January 3rd, the flag of the Rising Sun was hoisted over the citadel of Port Arthur, and one of the greatest transactions in the history of the world had been completed. The Japanese troops remained in their encampments out-

side the town. They lit great bonfires on the hills, and choruses of *Banzais* were heard on all sides. The carnage in the streets, which Stoessel had pretended to fear, had proved to be but the creature of his own imagination. The only carnage in Port Arthur was to be found in the Russian hospitals, which were a disgrace to civilisation and a convincing proof of the barbarity of the Muscovites.

On Wednesday, January 4th, the Japanese were in a position to issue the following despatch: "Order has been established in the town of Port Arthur. Everything is quiet in the official and civilian quarters. . . . There is a total absence of medical necessaries. We are therefore taking active measures to succour the sick and wounded. All officials, both by land and sea, are busily discharging their respective functions."

The British cruiser *Andromeda* left Wei-hai-wei for Port Arthur on Wednesday, January 4th, with supplies, medical appliances, and comforts for the Russian sick and wounded. She had two surgeons, almost the entire staff of the Government hospital, 80 tons of stores, including 350 beds and 100,000 lbs. of provisions. But the Japanese admiral notified her commander that the Mikado's Government did not require the proffered assistance, being fully equal to the emergency; and the *Andromeda* put back to Wai-hai-wei.

If there is one department more than another in which a Japanese army in the field excels, it is in its hospital service. Sir Frederick Treves, writing in 1904, after a recent visit to Japan, said: "When this inquisitive people turned Westwards, they cultivated surgery, at first mostly in England, and later in Germany and America. So far as there is any character in modern surgery, that of Japan is German. It is, however, being improved upon in countless details. The Japanese surgeon is no longer a servile imitator. He is intro-

ducing into his methods the results of his own ingenuity. Many features which in Europe are of the latest suggestion have already been anticipated in Japan. There is every possibility that the Japanese school of surgery will become a great school, for the native of Japan has qualities which are excellent in the making of a surgeon—he is not troubled by nerves; he is infinitely patient, fastidiously clean, as well as most neat and dexterous with his hands."[1] Sir Frederick Treves also speaks of "the extreme kindness of the Japanese to each other." The refusal of aid was, therefore, fully justified, and was in no sense intended as a slight to ourselves.

The Russians gave up possession of the dockyards and the naval property on Wednesday, January 4th. Ten small steamers were available for immediate use, all the rest of the craft, large and small, having been sunk.

On Thursday, January 5th, 5,000 of the garrison of Port Arthur marched out, and the rest of the Russians followed in detachments, and were taken to Dalny in special trains. It was now that all Stoessel's statements were one by one discovered to be false. The Russian soldiers, instead of being "reduced to shadows," are described as "looking well fed." It is stated that the officers were "clean and well clothed," but "the men were clad in filthy sheep-skin coats." It is said that the poor Russian soldiers "seemed resigned, and glad indeed that the end had come." We may be quite sure that they were in better "spirits" as they marched forth from Port Arthur, confident of good treatment at the hands of their captors, than they had ever been under General Stoessel's command. The affrighted moujiks appeared "surprised and pleased to find that they were treated with the greatest respect

[1] *The Other Side of the Lantern*, by Sir Frederick Treves, 1904.

and kindliness." A trustworthy eye-witness says: "The Russians were given food, cigarettes, and beer, and I even saw Japanese soldiers voluntarily carrying the effects of the prisoners when they noticed that these were overcome with fatigue."[1]

It was arranged that Stoessel was to meet General Nogi at noon on January 5th, the day the Russians marched out. Stoessel was at the place of meeting two hours before his time, and General Nogi had to be telephoned for. The behaviour of the Japanese General was admirable. He hurried from his head-quarters, and arrived at the *rendezvous* at eleven o'clock. He was accompanied by General Ijichi and Staff-officers Yasunara, Matsutaira, and Watanabe, and Mr. Kamukariu, Secretary of the Foreign Office in Tokio. We are told by an eye-witness that General Nogi looked careworn as he advanced to meet the Russian commander.[1]

Stoessel was a loosely-built, large, heavy man, while General Nogi was of low stature, slim, and slightly built. Stoessel could have treated Nogi in the same way as the commander of the *Reshitelni* treated the Japanese lieutenant at Chifu. But he had now learned the useful lesson that might, in the sense of brute strength, is no longer right amongst civilised nations. An interchange of compliments ensued. Stoessel mentioned that he had heard how General Nogi had lost both his sons, and, assuming his customary *rôle*, praised the Japanese general's loyalty "in sacrificing them for their Emperor and country." General Nogi replied as follows: "One son gave his life at Nanshan, the other on 203 Metre Hill. Both these were positions of the greatest importance to the Japanese army. I am glad that the sacrifice of my sons' lives was made at the capture of such important positions, as I feel

[1] Reuter's correspondent.

that the sacrifice has not been made in vain. Their lives were as nothing compared with the objects sought."

Stoessel then asked General Nogi to accept his charger as a token of the Russian general's admiration. The Japanese general's reply was characteristic. He thanked Stoessel, but said that he could not personally accept the present. The army, however, would accept it. General Nogi said he considered that all the horses of the garrison were the property of Japan. Therefore he could not make General Stoessel's charger a private possession. He guaranteed that the horse would be treated with the greatest kindness, when it was handed over, out of respect for its owner.

We can well understand the astonishment of the Russian general. He is said to have "expressed admiration for the rigorous principles of General Nogi," and said that he "appreciated his point of view"!

Stoessel was requested to remain in residence at Port Arthur for some days until arrangements were completed for his transfer to Japan. He inquired about Kuropatkin, and expressed his amazement when he heard of his continuous defeats, as to which he said he had been misled. He said he had not expected such considerate treatment. We can well understand that. It is too horrible to contemplate what would have taken place if Stoessel and the Russian army had succeeded in capturing a Japanese city, as General Nogi had captured Port Arthur. If the positions of the two men had been reversed, dreadful indeed would have been the carnage, debauchery, and the maltreatment meted out to the conquered.

The delivery of prisoners under the capitulation was

completed on Saturday, January 7th. "The total number of prisoners," said General Nogi, in his official despatch, "is 878 officers and 23,491 men, whereof 441 officers and 229 orderlies, so far, gave *parole*. Generals Fock, Smirnoff, and Gorbatovsky, and Admiral Wilmann preferred to be sent to Japan as prisoners, while General Stoessel leaves Dalny homewards on January 12th."

A later report from General Nogi showed, to the amazement of the world, that he had understated the strength of the surrendered garrison, which was now found to number 32,000, exclusive of 15,000 or 16,000 sick and wounded, making a total in rough figures of 48,000.

The transfer of Port Arthur was completed on Tuesday, January 10th, and the following official list of the captures was published by Japan :—

(*a*) 59 permanent forts and fortifications.

(*b*) 54 large, 145 medium, and 343 small cannons.

(*c*) 82,670 rounds of gun ammunition, 60 torpedoes, 1,588 explosives, 30,000 kilogrammes (over 29,000 tons) of powder.

(*d*) 35,252 rifles, 579 pistols, 1,891 swords, and 2,266,800 small-arm cartridges.

(*e*) 290 ammunition waggons, 606 transport waggons, 65 various waggons, 87 sets of riding harness, 2,096 sets of cart harness.

(*f*) 17 electric lights, 15 electric machines, 132 telephonic apparatus, 3 electric signal apparatus, 1,171 entrenching tools.

(*g*) 1,920 horses.

(*h*) 4 battleships, excluding the *Sevastopol*, which is entirely under water, 2 cruisers, 14 gunboats and torpedo craft, 10 steamers, 8 steam-launches, and 12 various vessels.

The world had not witnessed such a surrender since the capitulation of Bazaine, at Metz, in 1870.

There were only 76 Japanese prisoners discovered in Port Arthur, despite all the losses which Stoessel had been boasting that he had inflicted on the besiegers.

The Japanese had accommodation prepared for 35,000 prisoners at various towns, the main body of the captives being located near Osaka. No rational observer can doubt the correctness of those official figures. The Japanese have too much sense to follow Russia's dismal leadership into the wilderness of lies.

What plea of justification can be advanced on behalf of Stoessel? Upon what grounds did he surrender? He was immured in a fortress surrounded by rings of connected forts which, in the hands of 10,000 brave men, would have been impregnable. He had a fleet to assist him, which, if it were properly manned, should have nullified Admiral Togo's blockade. That he held out for eight months is to be ascribed to the numbers of his garrison and the vastness of his stores, which were able to stand the wear and tear of that period without strain.

Was it for want of ammunition he surrendered, as he himself boldly stated more than once in his telegrams to the Tsar? Assuredly it was not. He had been destroying the military property of Port Arthur for some time before the surrender, and, nevertheless, the Japanese found in his arsenals enough of ammunition to have enabled a hero to carry on the fight for an indefinite period—thousands of tons of powder, millions of cartridges, rifles and cannons by the thousand.

Was it for want of food that he surrendered? It assuredly was not. There could have been no scarcity

of provisions in a garrison which contained 1,920 well-fed horses. A trustworthy eye-witness says: "The food supply was sufficient for three months. No private stores were commandeered."[1] And again: "There are no signs of privation in Port Arthur. The surrender is inexplicable."

Was it because of his sick and wounded that he surrendered? The answer again must be in the negative. If he had more than his share of invalids, the blame lies with the barbarous hospital service of the Russians, who do not value the lives of their soldiers, and who treat their sick and wounded carelessly. On the day of surrender Stoessel had tens of thousands of able-bodied men in his garrison who walked cheerfully out of Port Arthur, giving vent to their delight at the humane treatment accorded to them by their Japanese conquerors.

The main lesson for us to learn from the fall of Port Arthur is that in our negotiations with Russia we should drop the policy of timidity which has hitherto characterised our dealings with that Power. Russia is only strong in the sense that, like Frankenstein's monster, she can retire into the ice wastes of the Arctic Circle, whither, as yet, no other Power has an object in pursuing her. The Japanese are reasonable men, and are only determined to drive Russia north of the Amur. They do not want a slice of Siberia, and they are too civilised to pursue a campaign of vengeance.

General Nogi held a review of his troops in the public square at Port Arthur on January 15th, all the foreign *attachés* being present. The same eye-witness, whom we have already quoted, was present in Port Arthur on that memorable day. No casualties had occurred amongst the women or children, who had

[1] *The Times'* correspondent with General Nogi's army.

lived in houses throughout the siege. "Champagne was always obtainable"! There was very little disease, except scurvy, which was caused by lack of vegetables. A large percentage of the Russian officers, he tells us, "were useless, applying for leave on days when there were attacks, and leaving the command to sergeants." That is the explanation of Stoessel's apologies to the Tsar for having appointed sergeant-majors to command the companies! "The naval officers were useless and were generally drunk. . . . The officers who have surrendered are happy and cheerful"!

One of the surrendered generals, named Nadein, one of the many who refused to give their paroles, preferring to remain prisoners in Japan rather than return home, said that during the siege he lived in the trenches. If General Nadein had been a court favourite he would not have spent much time in the trenches. "The bravery shown by the Japanese navy is beyond comparison," General Nadein said, "and Admiral Togo's achievements are unparalleled. Our soldiers are uneducated, but that is not the case with the Japanese. The bravery displayed by the Japanese soldiers is unrivalled, and it seems shameful to kill such splendid men. The Tsar is a good sovereign, but he rarely shows himself to the people." The Tsar lives in a fool's paradise at St. Petersburg shut off from the thoughts and feelings of his people as completely as Kwang-Su in his retreat in the Pink City. "I wish for peace," said General Nadein, "and I think that hostilities will cease in the coming autumn at the latest"—a very sagacious forecast.

Nicholas issued an order to his army and navy some weeks after the fall of Port Arthur, in which he officially announced the disaster, gilding the bitter pill with Imperial lavishness of mis-statement: "Deprived of help and without murmuring," he said, "the garrison

endured the privations of the siege and moral tortures while the enemy continued to gain successes." We, who have read Stoessel's whining telegrams, know that he was always murmuring. If he was deprived of help, the disgrace lies on the Russian fleet and Kuropatkin's army. We cannot analyse his moral tortures, but we can realise that he was deprived of that best of all help, which is self-help. The Imperial rescript piles untruth upon untruth: "Unsparing of life and blood," Nicholas says, "a handful of Russians sustained the enemy's furious onslaughts in the firm hope of relief." In the face of the actual figures it is absurd to speak of Stoessel's garrison as "a handful of Russians"! But Nicholas well knew the hopeless ignorance of his army and navy and of his people. He feared that if he told them the truth he would have driven them into revolution. It would have taken a Peter the Great to tell the truth and face the consequences. General Nadein truly said, "Our soldiers are uneducated, but that is not the case with the Japanese." Such untruths could not have been palmed off on the Japanese army or people.

Nicholas went on to say: "The resources gave out, while the onset of fresh hostile forces was constant, and the garrison, its deed of heroism accomplished, had to yield to superior numbers." In the face of the millions of cartridges and the thousands of tons of powder, and the hundreds of cannons and the warlike stores of every kind—so numerous that, even when Russian destructiveness had done its worst, there was still enough left to equip a large army for a long campaign—it is palpably untrue to say "the resources gave out." Nicholas then winds up with his customary public appeal to Heaven, and with floods of crocodile tears for his wretched moujiks who had been slain, and to whom he would have issued beggar's certificates

if they had returned to Russia maimed and crippled: "Far away from Russia you died for Russia's cause, filled with love for the Emperor and the Fatherland. Glory be to you the living! May God heal your wounds and give you the strength and the patience to bear your sore trials." How little had Nicholas done to heal their wounds! They were his creditors, for he had not even paid them their paltry wages! If they were now in temporary comfort they had to thank the Mikado; and it is more than doubtful if the Russian prisoners settled in Japan will voluntarily return to the bear-like caresses of the autocracy.

On January 17th General and Madame Stoessel, two generals, two admirals, 245 officers and their wives —out of a total of 878 officers, surrendered—and several civilians, left the Japanese port of Nagasaki, bound for Europe, having given their paroles that they would not again take up arms against Japan. It was said of them: "They have plenty of money, but the soldiers have not received their pay for many months."

There is not one redeeming feature to be found in this Russian *débâcle*.

Like Alexieff, Viceroy of the Far East, denying his responsibility for the naval and military defeats at Manchuria, Stoessel, when he arrived at the Crimea towards the end of February, threw discredit upon the Japanese accounts of his surrender and on the return of the number of prisoners taken in Port Arthur! The Russian prisoners are in the flesh in Japan for every one to see; but Stoessel knew that the millions of home-keeping Russians could never discover the truth. Indeed, it seemed as if an understanding had been come to by which only a percentage of the officers who surrendered should return to Russia, so that the people might not divine how great had been

the downfall.[1] The announcement of the surrender of Port Arthur was not made in Russia itself for more than a month after the occurrence.

[1] The distinguished correspondent of *The Times* at Peking, after a visit to Port Arthur and Dalny, wrote as follows: "Those who have witnessed the condition of the fortress, contrasting the evidence of their eyes with the astounding misrepresentations of General Stoessel, had their sympathy turned into derision, believing that no more discreditable surrender has been recorded in history."

CHAPTER XXII

The Tsar's scheme for improving the administration—Grand Duke Sergius opposes it—Imperial censure of the Zemstvos—Pobiedonostseff's fanatical appeal to Nicholas—Spurious revolution at St. Petersburg—Sergius assassinated—Armies before Mukden—Defeat and resignation of Gripenberg—The Kaiser reappears.

PANIC now prevailed in Russia. No more subscriptions were to be obtained even for the relief of the wounded, the funds and material already contributed for that purpose having been misappropriated, while the gravest scandals prevailed in the Commissariat Department. Kuropatkin was calling for more troops, although the strength of the Manchurian Army exceeded that of any army ever put into the field by Russia. It was pointed out that the battle of the Sha-ho, in which the Russians admitted a loss of nearly 50,000 officers and men, had been "the fourteenth fight in which the Russian soldiers had been engaged without being able to record a single victory." [1]

The Tsar was nervously playing with the question of reform, and promulgated "A scheme for the Improvement of the Administration of the State," hoping thereby to postpone a revolution until Kuropatkin should have had time to win the long-deferred victory. Nicholas said he issued the scheme "in accordance with the revered will of his crowned predecessor, thinking unceasingly of the welfare of the realm

[1] *New York Herald*, St. Petersburg correspondent.

entrusted to him by God, and in conjunction with the undeviating maintenance of the immutability of the fundamental laws of the Empire."

Nicholas's position was as untenable as Kwang-Su's. The Autocracy was theoretically immutable, yet he contemplated a change, hoping that the reformation might be nominal rather than real—mainly a commission of investigation into "the general needs of the agricultural industry."

Nicholas's pen was almost as eloquent as Kwang-Su's vermilion pencil: "Surveying the wide domain of the uttermost needs of the people," he exclaims, "we regard as urgent in the interest of the legal strengthening of civic and public life"—a number of petty suggestions for reform, the first of which was "the adoption of effective measures for safeguarding the law in its full force as the most important pillar of the Throne of the Autocratic Empire"!

But there was this important difference between the Son of Heaven and the God on Earth. Kwang-Su was ready to sacrifice himself and really anxious to improve; Nicholas was not prepared to do anything beyond making illusory promises.

The local and municipal institutions of Russia were to be subjected to an investigation; steps were to be taken to unify judicial procedure throughout the Empire, and to assure the independence of the courts; but Nicholas did not say how those ends were to be secured. "Attention was to be given to the question of the introduction of the State insurance of workmen"; but Nicholas made no decree on the subject. "There should be a revision of the exceptional laws decreed at the time of an unparalleled outbreak of criminal activity on the part of the enemies of public order"; but Nicholas did not decree the abolition of any of those penal statutes.

"The laws dealing with the rights of communities and of persons who belong to heterodox and non-Christian confessions should be submitted to revision, and measures should be taken for the removal of all limitations on the exercise of their religion *not directly mentioned in the law.*" But, if the existing law was not to be changed, how could religious grievances be redressed? "All unnecessary restrictions should be removed from the existing Press laws," Nicholas declared; but he did not remove them.

He recommended the Council of Ministers "to examine the best way of giving effect to his views, and to submit their decisions to him." But, on the same day on which his decree was issued, an official *communiqué* was published condemning the Zemstvos' proposals for reform as "inadmissible," threatening the representatives with punishment, and warning them to keep within the limits of the functions assigned to them. And such is the terrorism veiled under an "official *communiqué*" in Russia, that on December 27th the following resolution was passed by the Zemstvo Congress of the Moscow Government: "This Zemstvo, deeply moved by the Government *communiqué* with regard to the proceedings at Zemstvo meetings, is unable to continue its business with the necessary calm, and therefore adjourns *sine die.*"

One of the bitterest opponents of reform was the Tsar's uncle, the Grand Duke Serge-Alexandrovitch, Governor-General of Moscow. He encouraged Pobiedonostseff in opposing even the consideration of the reforms suggested in Nicholas's weak decree, which the Minister of the Interior had gladly accepted.

Sviatopolk-Mirski was charged with inconsistency for accepting the Tsar's inadequate proposals; but his reply was that the demands of the Zemstvos and the municipalities of St. Petersburg and Moscow went

much farther than he expected, and were "totally impracticable in view of the political immaturity of the Russian people."

In order to mark his disapproval of all projects of reform, the Grand Duke Sergius resigned his position as Governor-General of Moscow. Pobiedonostseff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, was, next to Sergius, the most formidable opponent to reform; and he now exerted himself to the utmost to thwart and delay the investigation by the Council of Ministers of the subjects submitted to them in the Tsar's decree. It was said that the movement for amelioration was supported by the Empress-Dowager and General Kuropatkin; but such rumours are not of importance. The ultimate result alone counts.

The corporations of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa, Nijni Novgorod, Saratof, Kirsk, Tula, Veronezh, Smolensk, Orel, and Simbirsk formally petitioned the Tsar to summon a congress of municipalities for the consideration of public grievances.

A great banquet had been held in the Pavloff Hall, St. Petersburg, on December 27th, which was attended by "many popular writers, nearly all the professors of the University, the Technological and Polytechnic Institutes, and the Mining School."[1] The date selected was the anniversary of the Revolution of 1825, when an attempt was made to dethrone Nicholas I., and when a Constitution was demanded for the first time in Russia. It was presided over by a well-known solicitor and municipal councillor of St. Petersburg, and, as popular expressions of opinion in Russia are so rare, the resolution passed at this banquet deserves quotation in full: "In view of the horrors of the war, which is devoid of sense, and in view of the enormous sacrifices and ruin in which the country is

[1] *The Times.*

being involved, we, representing both the liberal professions and the working classes, protest against the war into which the Government has dragged the nation, without consideration for the opinions and interests of the Russian people; and we express our profound belief that only the nation itself can save Russia from her difficulties through free representatives of the people elected by secret ballot on the principle of equal rights. Our mottoes are Peace and Freedom." This resolution, it is said, was adopted in the small hours of the morning—2.30 a.m.—by a majority of 766 votes to 7. Next day the St. Petersburg newspapers contained no mention of the banquet, though the European correspondents disseminated the details all over the continent.

After the fall of Port Arthur the Council of Ministers at St. Petersburg displayed a feverish activity, and loudly proclaimed that they were busy preparing a draft of the reforms to be made. M. Mouravieff, who had spoken against all amelioration, now hastened to publish his views: "When we have agreed upon the purport of the articles of the rescript, we shall call together the delegations of the Zemstvos and of the municipalities in order to consider in consort with them the reforms which are at the present time indispensable for the discharge of their duties."

Disturbances began to be rife all over Russia, but especially in the capitals, at Warsaw, and in South Russia, where the Emperor had just been making a tour. Fearful lest the sovereign should yield to the reformers, Pobiedonostseff, on behalf of the "Holy Synod," sent an address to the Tsar, in which he frantically implored Nicholas not to reform the Autocracy. British citizens may learn from this document why the poor Russians when they become revolutionaries also become Anarchists and Nihilists as well. Bred in a

religion of which Pobiedonostseff is the head and type, it need not surprise us if their awakening intelligence should lose faith in Divine and human justice alike.

"Very clement Sovereign," began this arch-hypocrite, "our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, has imposed on thee the sacred mission of erecting the Orthodox cross in the Far East, in the midst of populations which believe in idols, and not in God, and which, therefore, do not represent the Divine image, but *resemble the impure monkey species.* Certainly it is not easy, this mission of bearing the Cross, and still less easy that of erecting it among the enemies of the faith. Hard trials were, however, borne not only by our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, but also by the apostles and by thy ancestors, the Tsars.

"The hour of victory is nigh. By thy sovereign will hundreds of thousands of sons of the Orthodox Church, who are sincerely devoted to thee, are sent to defend the mother country and Orthodoxy, and thither also are hurrying daily and hourly innumerable armies of thy faithful subjects.

"And it is at such a moment that thy servants, Tsar, and thy nobles who approach thee, dare to trouble thy sacred and truly Orthodox spirit by their insensate machinations for the weakening of thy autocratic power, and for the formation of States General. All these machinations derive from the fact that thy enemies, who, for this very reason manifestly envy thee, feel that on thee devolves the felicitous historical mission of establishing the Orthodox Faith in the Far East.

"Thou hast the right, being Autocrat and anointed of God, to do all things according to thy judgment, and to the desire of thy heart. Thou hast the right to put to death or to pardon thy faithful subjects. Thou hast the right to exercise thy mercy or thy wrath on

all, as it pleaseth thee. Thou reignest for the glory of Russia, and to strike fear into thy foes.

"But thou, our Tsar, hast not the right to forfeit the sacred oath which thou hast taken before the Lord thy God to keep the promises of thy forefathers, to preserve the Autocracy and the Orthodox Faith, which is intimately bound thereunto. Forget not, O Tsar, that thou art the anointed of God. Remember how thy august face shone in the Cathedral of the Assumption, when thou didst pronounce thy sacred promises to the Lord our God, when thou didst bear thy crown, thy sceptre, and the tokens of thy might, which were given thee, first, by thy forefathers, and, secondly, by all Orthodox people.

"Fear not the counsels of those near to thee, and forfeit not thy oaths. For if, O Autocrat, thou dost violate thy oath, all those near thee will begin to break theirs, and then will fall the whole prestige of the Church, the State, and the Holy Synod of all the Sacred Hierarchies, and, finally, will go down the Orthodox Faith before the triumph of the other race. —POBIEDONOSTSEFF."

This official pronouncement of the idol-adoring Established Church of Russia throws a lurid light on the internal condition of that country. We have to go back to the days of the Inquisition in Spain, or of the temporal power of the Roman Popes in Central Italy, to find a parallel for Pobiedonostseff's commands to the Tsar. This man, who is himself the basest of instruments in the hands of the Tsar and the Grand Dukes, pretends to dictate a specific course to Nicholas in the name of the Omnipotent Creator and of Christ the Redeemer, so that the lower strata of the population may be led to believe that any alleviation of their wretched condition would be contrary to the expressed will of God!

On Sunday, January 22nd, it was arranged that a public meeting should assemble before the Tsar's palace and request an interview with the sovereign, at which the populace might make a direct appeal for reform. The agitators were largely made up of workmen who were on strike, so that the issue was not entirely a political one. On the night before the proposed demonstration, the leaders waited upon the authorities with the craven request that the soldiers might not shoot down the people in case they assembled in defiance of the proclamation suppressing the proposed meeting. They were engaged in a movement to coerce the Tsar by a threatening demonstration, and they came beforehand to the Tsar's deputies with the absurd proposition that they should not be interfered with!

A number of Russian popes, subordinates of Pobiedonostseff, were amongst the noisiest of the ringleaders, and their presence in the counsels of the reformers must have put the Government in possession of all the secrets of the agitators.

The foolish Russian people came out in thousands on the appointed day, and were fired upon, many being killed and hundreds wounded; and the revolution ended in *fiasco*. Pobiedonostseff's agents—the boisterous popes—disappeared from public view when the outbreak had been cruelly and ignominiously suppressed.

Then the assassin came on the scene. Assassination is so easy—only one man is required to sacrifice his life—whereas a Cromwell revolution requires the co-operation of thousands of men, each one of whom is ready to die. It is worthy of note that Pobiedonostseff was not the victim selected. It was the Grand Duke Sergius who was blown to atoms in Moscow on February 17th, the assassin being arrested on the spot.

As long as Pobiedonostseff and his popes are safe, Nicholas need not fear the Russian revolutionists, and

Frenchmen may safely continue to subscribe to loans advanced on the security of the Russian Autocracy.

I have it on absolutely unimpeachable authority that Lord Salisbury more than once said in private, during the Irish land agitation, that if the Land Leaguers had shot one or two priests, they would have done more to free their country than if they had shot all the landlords in Ireland. Revolutions led by priests, whether in Russia or in Ireland, do not lead to emancipation. The Grand Duke who was slain was as much to blame as his catspaw, Pobiedonostseff, but he was assuredly not more culpable. The assassin described the Grand Dukes, as a body, as men who "had for years violated every law of decency . . . ruined the country, and, exploiting the weak will of the Tsar for their own ends, had made him a tyrant, so that his people now execrated him."[1]

Meantime, during December, inactivity prevailed before Mukden. Sakharoff sent telegrams about perfunctory skirmishes, accusing the Japanese of enlisting and organising Chunchuses to fight against the Russians. Wiring on December 5th, he said that he had received no reports of engagements with the enemy. "In spite of the cold and the nocturnal frosts, our troops, thanks to their dug-outs, warm clothing, and plentiful food, do not suffer from cold. No cases of death from cold have been reported. The troops are in excellent spirits." And again on December 12th: "There were twenty degrees of frost last night, but there is sunshine in the daytime. The health of the army is excellent."

The iteration of the phrase "The troops are in good spirits" is scarcely more remarkable than that of the phrase, "The wounded are returning to service." The truth is, as we know, that the Russian troops were not in good spirits. And it is also a fact that neither

[1] The *Matin*.

officers nor men willingly returned to the fighting-line when discharged from hospital. Doctors accepted bribes from those who could afford to give them, and men were certified as unfit for service who were really able to serve. The reservists and the older officers were constantly being invalided home; while the young and inexperienced, who did not know the efficacy of bribes, were hurried to the fighting-line.

An eye-witness in Manchuria relates the following story. He was travelling home by the Trans-Siberian Railway with the wife of a reservist officer who had left her husband at the war. She said she hoped to see her husband very soon again, saying: "It is enough to pay 300 or 400 roubles to the head doctor of the Medical Commission in order to be rejected.' You are then allowed to remain at home one year, after which another Commission in Russia examines you, and then you have to pay another sum as large as the former, and then you are free, quite free." Three of the lady's acquaintances had thus succeeded in escaping service, and her husband was invalided home a short time afterwards.[1]

The Russian peasants join the army with reluctance. Young men have been frequently known to starve and mutilate themselves to secure their rejection by the medical commissioners. Parents consider it a disgrace if their son becomes a soldier; and a retired soldier is regarded as one who has lost caste. Even wounded men get no pension—only beggars' licences which entitle them to solicit alms. If, therefore, Russian soldiers are occasionally brave, their courage is born of desperation; but the chivalrous type of courage, begotten of love of country and an appreciation of the cause for which they are fighting, has never been displayed by them.

[1] Italian correspondent, *The Times*, December, 1904.

On January 25th, a few days after the outbreak at St. Petersburg, the Russian army in Manchuria, under the immediate direction of General Gripenberg, made an offensive movement, ostensibly intended to turn the Japanese left flank, but the operation was undertaken rather with the object of distracting the world's attention from the revolution at home than in the hope of gaining any solid advantage. Reports of imaginary Russian victories were straightway circulated in Russia; but the truth was that the Russians suffered a very severe defeat, their losses being estimated at 10,000 killed and wounded. On January 30th Kuropatkin sent his usual telegram: "Our troops began to retire." Marshal Oyama reported that the Russian corpses found in one portion of the field of battle numbered no less than 1,200, and that the main body of Russians had retreated on January 30th and 31st, "having been repulsed on all sides." General Mistchenko, who seems to have been the moving spirit of the operation, was wounded in the knee.

Immediately after this failure, General Gripenberg was recalled from the front. On his arrival at Moscow, on February 16th, he followed Alexieff's example, and gave an interview to the *Novoe Vremya*: "General Kuropatkin was fully aware of my projected attack," he said, "and he himself fixed the limits from the south to the north-west beyond which I was not to advance. The Japanese dispositions were favourable to our attack. On the morning of the 26th a battle began along the whole line. By the evening we had maintained all our positions, but the left flank was weakened, so I begged General Kuropatkin, who had sixty battalions, to send me reinforcements. *He refused* on the ground that the Japanese were threatening to attack his centre."

Gripenberg says that he "again demanded reinforce-

ments" on the 27th, and that, had Kuropatkin complied with his request, he would have surrounded the Japanese. We need not pay too much attention to the complaints of the unsuccessful general; but it stands to reason that Kuropatkin should have had a grudge against Gripenberg because of the slight put upon himself by the manner of Gripenberg's appointment. "It is not for me to criticise," said Gripenberg, "but I must say that *the Japanese could not possibly have attempted any serious attack on General Kuropatkin's centre.*"

On the evening of the 28th Kuropatkin ordered a retirement. "It is difficult to describe my feelings," says Gripenberg, "on receiving General Kuropatkin's order. On the night of the 29th we retired, carrying away all our wounded, and even picking up broken bayonets. The men retired unwillingly with tears in their eyes. I decided that it was impossible for me to remain any longer at the front, and next day I reported myself to General Kuropatkin, asking him to relieve me of my command immediately. He did so."

It is evident that Nicholas showed no wisdom in the selection of his agents. His letter appointing Gripenberg proved that he placed the highest confidence in the new general. Its terms were tantamount to a condemnation of Kuropatkin; yet his confidence in Gripenberg did not embolden him to take the logical step of removing Kuropatkin and placing Gripenberg in supreme command.

Kuropatkin had taken up his winter quarters in Mukden, and was fortifying his entire front as if determined to remain on the defensive for an indefinite length of time. Roshdestvensky and Folkersahm and the Baltic Fleet remained hidden somewhere in Madagascar and the islands of the Indian Ocean all through the months of January and February, afraid to advance

to meet Admiral Kamimura, and evincing none of that brutal hurry with which they had swept through the German Ocean and the English Channel.

Rumours of peace now began to circulate freely, and the Americans, eager to be first in the field, had issued a note to the Powers, through Mr. Secretary Hay, in the following terms: "My Government having learned that some apprehension exists relative to the possibility that, in the eventual case of negotiations between Russia and Japan, in view of peace, some question might arise as to the concession of Chinese territory to some neutral Powers, I am instructed to make known to your Excellency that the President of the United States would greatly regret having to share those fears, because he is persuaded that the introduction in negotiations of this character of questions of interests foreign to those directly in dispute in the actual war would still further delay the conclusion of a peace which is so desirable.

"The United States have on several occasions made known their view on this question. It is well known, and they are pleased with the cordial welcome that has been accorded to their efforts in favour of the wide policy of maintaining the integrity of China, and of the principle of the open door in the East, where equality of commercial treatment and the same facilities should belong to all nations.

"Holding such views, my Government opposes all idea of the reservation of territorial rights or of control to be exercised in the Chinese Empire, and it thinks it should frankly make known its intentions in this respect so as to avoid all misunderstanding as to the policy of a nation which has so large commercial interests in the Pacific and in China, and whose possessions are so important in the region which gives access to the Chinese Empire.

"I shall have the honour to mention to your Excellency this matter at the next diplomatic reception, and I shall be pleased to obtain an expression of your views on the points I have indicated."

On January 24th it was announced from Washington that all the Powers had virtually assented to the terms of this note. The German Emperor, lest his pretensions in China should run the risk of being forgotten, had sent a telegram to the Mikado and the Tsar, some days after the fall of Port Arthur, announcing that he had conferred the Prussian Order "Pour le Merite" on Generals Nogi and Stoessel. The cold and chary replies of the Sovereigns, accepting his gratuitous piece of patronage, were indicative of their respective characters. The Tsar thankfully accepted the distinction; but the Mikado, while accepting the personal honour for Nogi, also expressed his pleasure at the Kaiser's approval of the capture of Port Arthur!

But more important than the Kaiser's self-advertisement, as indicating Germany's real intentions, was an article which appeared, in December, 1904, in the *Cologne Gazette*. The journal which had predicted the Anglo-Japanese alliance four years before it was actually concluded, now foreshadowed a project for effecting "a separation of Japan from Great Britain, and the formation of an alliance to include France, Russia, Germany, and Japan"!

at daylight on the 24th, and continued the assault all that day, and when night fell at 6 p.m. the Russians broke and "retired in disorder northward, leaving 150 dead, 24 prisoners, 3 machine-guns, 200 rifles, and 100,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition."

Sakharoff, in his report, said "the Japanese advanced over the bodies of their own dead, over exploding surface mines, and through barbed-wire entanglements"—which shows how safe the Russians had made their position, and how far it was from their intention to take the offensive against the Japanese.

If Kuropatkin now imagined that his opponents meant to rest on their laurels and suffer him to relapse into repose again, he was destined to be rudely undeceived. On Wednesday, March 1st, the entire Japanese line, extending in a convex curve for a length of eighty miles—west, south-west, south, and east of Mukden—began to advance; the roar of its artillery, the heaviest ever used in warfare, instilling terror into the hearts of the Russians.

Japan was now resolved to strike a blow, not only surpassing in magnitude and decisiveness all previous battles of the war, but destined to mark a record in the martial annals of humanity. Count Katsura, the Japanese Premier, speaking at Tokio, said: "The situation this time last year was not without uneasiness, considering the mighty antagonist with whom Japan had just crossed swords; but now entire confidence reigns. The fall of Port Arthur has virtually overthrown Russia's Far-Eastern power. The situation is now hopeless for her, which she herself must partially appreciate. But," he added, "only a statesman of transcendent ability and determination could be expected to recognise defeat in the circumstances." Katsura anticipated that Russia would continue the struggle, "trusting to the intervention of

good fortune." But he clearly announced that "Japan must neither relax her vigilance nor remit her efforts, inasmuch as the attainment of her real purpose was still distant—namely, the complete assertion of her ability to protect herself and the securing of a durable peace in the Far East."

The task before the Japanese army was one of extraordinary difficulty. The Russian forces on the line of the Sha-ho numbered 335,000 infantry, 33,000 cavalry, 35,000 artillery, and 1,504 guns, while the entire Muscovite army east of Lake Baikal was estimated at 700,000. The Russians were retreating upon their own ground into territory which was well known to them; while the Japanese were advancing into the unknown, with no great prize before them for their stimulation—as the Prussian army had, for instance, when it was marching through France with Paris as its objective. Fortunately for themselves the Japanese soldiers were patriots, and were led by veterans like Oku, Nodzu, Kuroki, and Nogi, who had never known defeat, and each of whom possessed not only the genius for command, but also the faculties of self-control and obedience, which were so pre-eminent in our own Wellington.

On March 1st the western Japanese army, under Oku, drove the Russian right out of the villages of Changtun and Sufangtai, situated west-south-west of Mukden and about fifteen miles distant from the Manchurian capital. On the following day the Japanese eastern army, under Kuroki, was fighting with the Russian left around Shingking, nearly ninety miles away; and the Japanese centre army was also engaged "forcing the enemy back to his main line of defences."

On the same day Oku's army advanced fifteen miles and captured Sinmintun, an important village on the Liao Ho, north-west of Mukden. The fighting all

along the line was of a most vehement character; large bodies of Russian troops were being expelled from "multiple lines of fortifications," and quantities of stores were being taken. In the pitched battles of the Sha-ho and Liao-Yang the number of Russian surrenders was few; but now the Muscovites were destined to be surrounded and taken prisoners in immense numbers.

On March 4th, Oku had advanced to a point about five miles due north of Mukden. The battle continued without cessation during March 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th, the Russians here resisting and retreating, there surrendering or flying in confusion, and finally evacuating the entire line of the Sha-ho, which they had been holding and fortifying since the great battle in October.

Kuropatkin's telegrams, as published during these dreadful days, gave little inkling of the truth. On March 1st his army was "maintaining its ground"; on March 2nd and 3rd "the Japanese were repulsed with enormous losses," and the Russian losses were "insignificant." On March 4th the "Japanese corpses were piled up against the Russian earthworks. . . ." Kuropatkin even said his "detachment at Kudiasa made a partial advance." On March 5th he was still repulsing the Japanese, and, lapsing into the language of Stoessel, he exclaimed, "All are brave"!

On March 7th his right flank "was taking the offensive"; he had counted 30 Japanese officers and 2,000 men dead in front of his centre at Kau-tu-ling; his detachment at Towangushan "repulsed several attacks, inflicting enormous losses on the enemy." In a word, the populace at St. Petersburg must have been led to believe that Kuropatkin was winning a great victory.

The inevitable anti-climax to this tirade of boasting is to be found at the close of his telegram on

March 7th: "*A squadron* of Japanese cavalry and *a half-company* of infantry retreated in disorder, leaving behind them their killed and a quantity of arms"!

One would wish to give Kuropatkin the benefit of the doubt, and ascribe this bathos to the "competent military authorities" of the Russian War Office who were doctoring his telegrams for publication; but one cannot avoid recalling his telegram about the loss of "six men" during the battle of Liao-Yang. To write thus gravely of the retreat of a few hundred men, "a *squadron* of cavalry and a *half-company* of infantry," while a battle was raging in which over three-quarters of a million of soldiers were engaged in a death-struggle is to trifle with human intelligence.

It was on Wednesday, March 8th, that the web of Russian deceit and Japanese uncommunicativeness was cleft asunder by the announcement that the Japanese were bombarding Mukden from the north-west, and that a battle was proceeding near the imperial tombs of the Manchu emperors. On March 8th, Marshal Oyama telegraphed that he had cut the railway north of Mukden.

On the following day he sent further particulars of his operations: "After an attack lasting many days, the enemy at Tita, who had resisted obstinately in a strong position, was driven out at 3 a.m. on March 9th, and is now being pursued." Oyama's troops on the east were approaching Fushun, a town on the Hun-ho, fifteen miles due east of Mukden. "South and east of Mukden," he continued, "we have completely driven the enemy into the valley of the Hun River, where he is now receiving an attack behind strong defences. West and north of Mukden an attack is continued with the utmost vehemence against the enemy, who is resisting most obstinately."

Kuropatkin was dumb. He must have telegraphed home, but the censors published nothing from him on the 9th or 10th, except an unofficial telegram of four words, dated March 10th, "I am surrounded," the effect of which was to prepare the public mind for a calamity which did not occur.

On Friday, March 10th, the following telegram from Marshal Oyama was published all over the civilised world: "At 10 a.m. we occupied Mukden. Our enveloping movement, which had been proceeding for several days, has completely attained its object."

At the moment this telegram was despatched, fierce engagements were still in progress near Mukden. The Russian troops "had lost all formation from noon on March 10th, and, in a pitiably exhausted and suffering condition, streamed northwards." The Japanese artillery concentrated their fire on them until sunset, inflicting heavy losses. On March 11th Marshal Oyama wired: "We are pressing the enemy from every direction, and, emerging on the north bank of the Hun, our troops inflicted heavy losses." The Japanese "surrounded a large column"—not a squadron or a half-company—of Russians and compelled them to surrender. Near Mukden the shattered forces of Kuropatkin were "resisting or surrendering."

Oyama said: "The enemy's dead are piled up everywhere in heaps. There has been no time to deal with them." Poor misguided, badly-treated moujiks, your oligarchs did not value you as highly as horses when you were alive! "The killed, wounded, prisoners, and spoils are exceedingly numerous. Garments, provisions, and fodder lie in mountainous heaps. Their amount defies calculation."

Up to March 10th, the day Mukden was captured, the number of Russian prisoners taken was 20,000; "but," says Oyama, "the numbers are momentarily increasing. He informed his Government that he expected the prisoners would number 30,000, and requested that transport arrangements should be made for the conveyance of that number to Japan. By nightfall on March 11th the number of prisoners taken by the Japanese army had increased to over 40,000, and included a Russian general, named Nakhimoff.

Up to that hour also 26,500 Russian dead had been counted on the field; while "other dead and wounded" numbered "about 90,000"—and those figures did not include the Shingking region, where Kuroki had been fighting!

The spoil taken by the Japanese included: (*a*) Two regimental flags; (*b*) 60 cannon; (*c*) 60,000 rifles; (*d*) 1,150 ammunition and transport waggons; (*e*) 200,000 rounds of heavy gun ammunition; (*f*) 25,000,000 rounds of rifle ammunition; (*g*) 360,000 bushels of corn and fodder; (*h*) 45 miles of military railway materials; (*i*) 300 railway waggons; (*k*) 2,000 horses; (*l*) 23 cartloads of maps; (*m*) 1,000 cartloads of accoutrements; (*n*) 1,000,000 loaves of bread; (*o*) 70,000 tons of fuel; (*p*) 60 tons of hay, besides great numbers of entrenching tools, tents, oxen, telegraph materials, timber, iron beds, and stoves.

On March 15th Marshal Oyama entered Mukden in triumph, amidst a demonstration of welcome from the Chinese officials and people. The capitulation of Port Arthur was completely cast into the shade by the colossal dimensions of the Russian losses in men and material at the capture of Mukden—a military operation for which human history records no parallel. The total Japanese casualties, from February 26th to

March 10th inclusive, were returned at 41,222, while those of the Russians were at least 200,000! In the Shingking district, where the fighting had been of a more open description, the Russians got away with a loss of 1,200 dead left on the field, as well as a considerable amount of ammunition and stores; and only eighty prisoners left in the hands of the victors.

Kuropatkin's published telegrams, from March 1st to 8th, as to the "enormous losses" of the Japanese and the "insignificant" losses endured by himself, had been as misleading as Stoessel's messages of the same description from Port Arthur. On March 10th he telegraphed: "The retreat of the army is very dangerous, and especially trying for those corps which are some distance from the Mandarin road . . . but, thanks to extraordinary efforts, our armies are out of danger."

The ignominious defeat, the falsification of all his statements, the loss of 30,000 killed, 60,000 wounded, 40,000 taken prisoners, and the destruction or capture of all his mammoth stores of provender and ammunition, counted as nothing in his estimation. He was "out of danger"!

The swaggering of Stoessel in the presence of General Nogi, after the surrender of Port Arthur, pales before the published comments of the great strategist on his own rout from Mukden. No expression of regret for the sacrifice of life and material, no perceptible sense of shame—only a feeling of craven joy that a portion of his army, including himself, had escaped. The dead Russian admirals, Makaroff and Vitoft, seem to be heroes in comparison with the Russian generals. Kuropatkin's excessive protestations as to the "bravery" of his troops now became as perplexing as Stoessel's asseverations to the same

effect before the Port Arthur capitulation. "Our troops are very brave"! he wrote, as he scrambled in confusion to Tieling, thirty-five miles north of Mukden.

On March 11th he wired that the number of wounded whom he had succeeded in "sending north"—to Harbin—was 1,190 officers and 46,391 men. "The retreat from Mukden," he said, "has been extremely arduous." Then follows his customary assertion, based this time on a more slender foundation of fact than in his previous retreats: "Our rearguard advanced in perfect order, halting at positions indicated beforehand." By "advanced" he means "retreated"; and it is little wonder if by this time he had come to believe the terms synonymous, for his entire career in the Far East consisted of an advance backwards to Siberia.

Like a wily Russian diplomatist, he had a word of compliment for his conquerors, which tended to ease his own galling position and soften the world's criticism: "Further, thanks to the organisation of their Intelligence Department," he wrote, "and to the fact that their reconnaissances were carried out *even in time of peace*, the Japanese always knew the positions occupied by our army." The words, "even in time of peace," are illuminating. They inform us that the Russians made no reconnaissances between battles, but lived at ease in the aroma of Government storehouses well filled with Government-manufactured alcoholic liquors.

Kuropatkin now seems to have counted upon spending some time in comfort in Tieling, during which he might reorganise the *disjecta membra* of his army; and on March 14th the boastful note became uppermost again in his telegram: "A fierce Japanese attack on the centre of our positions on the river

Fan-ho has been repulsed. More than 1,000 corpses remain in the front of our positions"!

The Mikado, alive to the importance of the great victory at Mukden, addressed a message to the Japanese armies on March 15th: "Since the autumn the enemy had been executing strong defences at Mukden," he said, "and had been holding the district with superior force and was confident of victory over our Manchurian armies. Forestalling the enemy, however, we boldly and vigorously assumed the offensive, and, after strenuous fighting for more than ten days and nights, through the snow and biting wind, defeated a strong enemy, driving them to Tieling, taking tens of thousands of prisoners, and otherwise inflicting serious injuries. Through this signal victory our Manchurian armies have enhanced the military prestige of the country at home and abroad. We are deeply gratified by the courage and endurance with which our officers and men were able to achieve such a great success, and we look to you for even greater exertions in future."

On the next day, March 16th, the following brief telegram from the Japanese Marshal gave the *quietus* to Kuropatkin's boasting: "Our advanced troops, pressing the enemy everywhere, occupied Tieling at 12.20 a.m. this morning." Further particulars soon followed. The buildings and appurtenances of Tieling railway station were as valuable as those of Liao-Yang. Vast quantities of provisions and forage were stored in the vicinity; but the Russians had burned "about two-thirds of them" before their flight.

Kuropatkin now showed what Count Katsura would describe as "a partial appreciation" of his disastrous defeat by asking for liberty to resign his command; and the Tsar assented, without requesting him to

reconsider his determination. The Russian pack of commanders was once more shuffled for a fresh deal, but it contained no new trumps. General Linievitch, whom Kuropatkin had originally superseded, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. But, fearful of entirely discarding the stratogist's dearly-bought experience, Nicholas reappointed Kuropatkin to the command of the First Manchurian Army. It was irrational to expect that Linievitch and Kuropatkin could work cordially together in their altered positions; but the autocracy could not produce from amongst its favourites a genius capable of inspiring hope into the demoralised moujiks—the unhappy heirs of ages of persecution.

In many quarters personal sympathy was now expressed for Kuropatkin; and few indeed could be so hard of heart as to deny him their commiseration. It was alleged that the Court party had always been hostile to him "because he did not come from the Imperial Guard and was not sufficiently well-born."[1] If he were not a Court favourite he would never have attained to the positions of Minister of War and Commander-in-Chief. One may sympathise with him personally, but such feelings are only accidental elements of the situation. One must not forget the gasconnade with which he entered upon his important office; nor should we lose sight of the fact that in his capacity of Generalissimo of the Russian army he was the embodiment of a politico-religious oligarchy which, in the name of Christianity, enslaves 140,000,000 of white men and women, maintains them in the condition of brutes by withholding from them the light of knowledge, plies them with State-manufactured alcohol to deaden their senses, and converts one of the vastest and most fertile areas of this planet into

[1] *Echo de Paris.*

a pestilential prison-house and a den of human wild beasts. Therefore let us not expend all our sympathy on one Russian, named Kuropatkin; but let us rather spare the bulk of it for those 140,000,000 brethren of his who are being drugged and outraged by the Romanoffs and Pobiedonostseffs, the Kuropatkins and Alexieffs, the Muravieffs and Kokovzovs—

"Those rulers in all forms of lust."[1]

On March 19th the Japanese army, having pursued the enemy sixty miles in nine days, occupied Kaiyuan, an important station on the railway, twenty-five miles north of Tieling. Nor did they rest there, but again pushed forward and occupied Changtufu, another railway station, twenty-five miles north of Kaiyuan. Buried Russian cannons were being unearthed, and each day was adding to the quantity of the victor's spoils.

An official announcement was now made at St. Petersburg[2] that from the beginning of the war up to March 25th, 1905, the Siberian Railway had delivered at Harbin 13,687 officers, 761,476 soldiers, 146,408 horses, 1,521 guns, and 351,000 tons of stores —thereby effectually dispelling the delusion entertained in many quarters that Kuropatkin had been outnumbered, or had suffered from a shortage of men or supplies.

Linievitch had now retreated to Changchun, a station on the railway, sixty-five miles north of Changtufu and 150 miles distant from Mukden, and was there endeavouring to reconstruct into an army the shattered but considerable remnants of his enormous force.

[1] Reference to Russian autocracy in poem by Mr. George Meredith, *The Times*, March 24, 1905.

[2] *Russki Invalide*, organ of the General Staff.

The newspapers were full of paragraphs about the new Commander-in-Chief's nationality, religion, and genealogy. It was discovered with extraordinary rapidity that he was a Polish Roman Catholic who had married a Russian lady of the orthodox religion; that he had a lame leg; and that he had informed the troops on his first arrival in Manchuria that he was therefore ill-adapted for swift retreats.

He had shown remarkable celerity, nevertheless, in covering the 150 miles of rough country between Mukden and Changchun; and he now began to send home telegrams precisely corresponding to Kuropatkin's at all similar stages of the campaign where the Russians had beaten retreats with heavy casualties: "On the 23rd our cavalry drove back a force of Japanese cavalry which had approached the station of Shuangmiaotzu. . . . Our cavalry forced the Japanese cavalry, which refused to face a charge, back to Nanshentsi, their retreat being covered by infantry. . . . The spirit of the troops is good."

Meanwhile the Japanese fleets were blockading Vladivostock and patrolling the southern seas as far west as Ceylon, eagerly watching for Roshdestvensky's arrival. British and other vessels bound for Vladivostock with coal and various supplies were being captured by them almost daily. In the two months from January 13th to March 13th it was stated that twenty-one steamers were seized, of which nineteen were insured in London for £1,300,000.

While his soldiers were being defeated in Manchuria and his sailors were malingering in Madagascar the Tsar was improvising schemes at home for the preservation of the autocracy. Towards the close of February, immediately after the Japanese offensive movement began, some Russian newspapers mustered up courage to express their convictions. "Can any

one in Russia venture to assert," asked one Russian journal,[1] "that we are shedding our blood in Manchuria for any civilising object, seeing that the war in which we are engaged there is constantly showing how much we are in need of civilisation ourselves?" "Russia has already lost 200,000 men," said another important paper,[2] "a milliard of roubles" (£100,000,000), "the best part of her fleet, and her best generals and admirals. To insist on continuing the war under such circumstances would be folly." The inspired French newspapers announced that the Tsar was about to issue a manifesto in the course of a week, in which he would grant, or promise, a representative system of government.

A week having elapsed and no tidings of victory having arrived from Kuropatkin, Nicholas issued two rescripts on March 3rd, just when the Russian position around Mukden was becoming dangerous. The first was in the nature of a Bull, composed by him in his pontifical capacity; for he astutely concluded that the superstition of the peasants was the only safe support on which he could rely. The pseudo-revolution of Sunday, January 22nd, the immunity of Pobiedonostseff as contrasted with the assassination of Sergius, had convinced him that the priest was still mightier than the sword in Russia.

The Tsar therefore assumed the character of God on Earth and Supreme Head of the Orthodox Church, and delivered himself thus *ex cathedra*—

"An inscrutable Providence has been pleased to visit our Fatherland with heavy trials. A bloody war in the Far East, the honour of Russia, and the command of the waters of the Pacific Ocean, so urgently necessary for the consolidation of the peaceful pros-

[1] *Birzheviya Viedomosti.* [2] *Novoe Vremya.*

perity not only of our own, but also of other Christian nations throughout the ages, have imposed a great strain upon the strength of the Russian people and swallowed up many dear victims near to our heart. While the glorious sons of Russia are fighting with self-sacrificing bravery and risking their lives for faith, for Tsar, and for country, disturbances have broken out in our country itself, to the joy of our enemies and to our own deep sorrow.

"Blinded by pride, the evil-minded leaders of the revolutionary movement make insolent attacks on the Holy Orthodox Church and the lawfully-established pillars of the Russian State, thinking that by severing the natural connection with the past they will destroy the existing order of the State and set up in its place a new administration on a foundation not suitable to our Fatherland.

"The outrage upon the Grand Duke Serge, who ardently loved the first capital of the Empire, and who came to his end amidst the sacred monuments of the Kremlin, deeply shocks the national feeling of every one to whom the honour of the Russian name and the renown of his home are dear. We humbly bear the trials sent us by Providence, and derive strength and consolation from our firm trust in the grace which God has always shown to the Russian power, and from the immemorial devotion which we know our loyal people entertain for the Throne.

"With the help of the prayers of the Holy Orthodox Church, under the banner of the autocratic might of the Tsar, Russia has already frequently passed through great wars and disturbances, always issuing from her troubles and difficulties with fresh and unbending strength. Nevertheless, the recent internal disorder and the instability of thought which have favoured the spread of revolt and disturbances make it our duty

to remind all those in Government institutions and all authorities of the duties of their office and of their service oath, and to call upon them to display increased solicitude in the safeguarding of law, order, and security, in the firm consciousness of their moral responsibility as servants of the Throne and the Fatherland.

"Thinking unceasingly of the welfare of our people, and firmly trusting that God, after He has tried our patience, will give victory to our arms, we appeal to right-minded people of all classes to join us, each in his calling and in his place, in single-minded coöperation by word and deed in the great and sacred task of overcoming the stubborn foreign foe, and of eradicating revolt at home, and in wise efforts to check internal confusion. We wish to remind every one in this connection that only if there is tranquillity of mind throughout the whole population is it possible to realize our aims for a renewal of the quiet life of the people, the strengthening of its prosperity, and the perfecting of the administration of the State. Let all those rally round the Throne who, true to Russia's past, honestly and conscientiously have a care in accord with ourselves for every affair of the State.

"May God send down on the clergy holiness, on those in authority justice and truth, on the people peace, on the laws power, and on faith strength to the consolidation of the autocracy and the welfare of our dear subjects.—NICHOLAS."

This imperial decree, which reads so plausibly, is composed of a tissue of misrepresentations unsurpassed even among Russian official documents for their number and variety—

1. "The command of the waters of the Pacific Ocean" by Russia is not "urgently necessary for the

consolidation of the peaceful prosperity of other Christian nations throughout the ages."

2. The "victims swallowed up" in the war were not "near to the heart" of Nicholas and the Grand Dukes.

3. The "sons of Russia" in Manchuria were not "glorious"; did not show "self-sacrificing bravery"; did not risk their lives "for faith, for Tsar, and for country."

4. Those who demanded reforms in the Russian system of government were not "blinded by pride"; and the "evil-minded leaders of the revolutionary movement" did not "make insolent attacks on the Holy Orthodox Church."

5. The assassination of Sergius "in the midst of the sacred monuments of the Kremlin" did not "shock the national feeling of every one to whom the honour of the Russian name" was dear.

6. *Non constat* that Nicholas "humbly bears the trials sent by Providence"; or that he derives "strength and consolation" from his "firm trust in the grace which God has always shown to the Russian power." There is no evidence of strength, or grace, or humility, but rather of everything directly opposite to those virtues.

7. "The prayers of the Holy Orthodox Church and the autocratic might of the Tsar" have not brought Russia out of former troubles, similar to those which now oppress her, "with fresh and unbending strength." They have rather freshened up the oligarchy for a new career of persecution, lust, and dishonesty.

As for Nicholas's public prayers, one feels inclined to refer him to that Divine Master of whom he falsely professes to be the sole agent over an area of 8,660,395 square miles of the earth's surface: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the

corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." If any men on this earth can be truly said to "have their reward," those men are Nicholas and his relatives the Grand Dukes and their subordinates and parasites.

In many respects the Tsar's position resembles that of Rehoboam, son of Solomon. The Russian millions come to him and say: "Thy fathers made our yoke grievous: now, therefore, ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy fathers and their heavy yoke that they put upon us, and we will serve thee." If Nicholas had the grace to "take counsel with the old men," they would say to him: "If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever."

Is Nicholas prepared to be a servant to his people and to serve them? Must they appeal to him in vain, saying: "What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse"? If so, may they have the strength of the Hebrews of old, and cry aloud with all their might: "To your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David"! May they be emboldened to stone the first Adoram who comes to them to collect tribute! But before such calamities have happened, may some man of God, like Shemaiah of old, speak words of justice unto Nicholas, saying: "You shall not fight against your brethren the children of Israel"!

In a second rescript, issued on the same date, and addressed to the Minister of the Interior, Nicholas made the following promise: "I am resolved henceforth, with the help of God, to convene the worthiest men possessing the confidence of the people and elected by them to participate in the elaboration and consideration of legislative measures."

The chastened tone of this rescript may be attributed partly to the continued reverses in Manchuria, but more largely to the financial troubles which now confronted the Russian autocracy. Men, horses, and supplies may be procurable in almost limitless quantities in a nation where the labouring classes are slaves; but gold must be forthcoming to pay foreign creditors and procure those necessaries which can only be obtained abroad. The French people, it appears, had already advanced Russia the greater portion of £300,000,000; and the Paris bankers, it was now stated, refused to advance an additional £20,000,000 asked for by the Tsar. Under these depressing circumstances the Russian Government endeavoured to raise the money from their own impoverished people by an internal loan.

Baron Suyematsu, whose name has been already mentioned in these pages, was now in Paris, and there made an important statement for the information of Russia's creditors. Rumours of peace were in the air. Viscount Hayashi said that when he was in Berlin in July, 1904, M. Witte sent a messenger to ask him "if he was willing to arrange a meeting in order to discuss terms of peace." Viscount Hayashi "accepted the proposal, but M. Witte returned to St. Petersburg and Viscount Hayashi remained without news."[1] It was now stated in St. Petersburg that Viscount Hayashi "had apparently been duped." It is evident that the Japanese ambassador was duped by the Russian "diplomatists," just as any honourable man may be duped by a welsher on the racecourse. But heavily indeed have the "diplomatists" paid in blood and treasure for the accomplishment of their trick. It was since July that all the great disasters to Russian arms had happened in Manchuria—the destruction of

[1] The *Matin*.

the Pacific Fleet; the defeats at Liao-Yang, and at the Sha-ho; the capitulation of Port Arthur; and the overwhelming disaster at Mukden.

Baron Suyematsu now said:[1] "The present military prospect is so favourable that it would not be in Japan's interest to propose peace, although she desires it as keenly as does the rest of the world. Japan has a right," he continued, "to exact certain conditions, including an indemnity. And within six months or a year, when Harbin, Vladivostock, and Sakhalin are in Japanese hands, the conditions can only become more onerous. At present the Japanese conditions do not include the cession of Russian territory properly so called. No ransom is asked of Russia, but merely indemnification for a part of the losses which this war, imposed upon Japan by Russia, has caused her. Japan repudiates any intention to humiliate Russia, and, in fact, hopes after the present duel to shake hands with her loyally and to live with her on terms of friendship."

The Japanese had never spoken slightingly of their opponents at any stage of the war; but, since the victory at Mukden, their tone towards Russia had been more than conciliatory. Marshal Oyama had broken his hitherto impenetrable reserve, and had given an interview to an English correspondent:[2] "Personally I have a high regard for the Russian soldiers," he chivalrously said. "In the war between China and Japan, I was commander of the army which captured Port Arthur. With a division and a half we took the city in five hours. The result this time shows the wonderful difference there is between the Russians and the Chinese."

"In olden days," he said, "the Japanese army was composed of Samurai, or professional fighting men.

[1] The *Matin*. [2] Reuter's correspondent with General Oku.

Our modern army is composed of all classes of society, and all our hopes have been realised by the work of the army in the present war." When shall the fortunate day arrive in the United Kingdom when we shall get rid of our highly-paid *Samurai*, who do not fight, and our poorly-paid *Samurai*, who fight under grievous disadvantages, and when we can point to our army as being "composed of all classes of society," more especially of the middle class?

Referring indirectly to Russia's financial difficulties, Baron Suyematsu explained that "there is not a country in the world where a war so little disorganises the economic situation as in Japan, because nowhere else is there so much female labour." Nor must it be inferred from this statement that the scheme of advanced civilisation for Japan includes no concurrent improvement in the condition of women. The truth is, that in no country in the world is the higher education of women more eagerly sought after. Marshal Oyama's wife, for instance, was one of a numerous party of Japanese girls who went to the United States in the early 'seventies and obtained their degrees at Vassar College. Since then Japanese girl-graduates have been so numerous in the Universities of Europe and America that we have ceased to regard them as phenomena.

An able article on the solvency of Russia appeared in *The Times* of March 11th, in which the writer asserted that a long-continued yearly deficit in the Russian Budgets was only partially made good by the native gold-production and constant borrowings in the Continental money markets, the balance of the deficit being paid out of an alleged Russian gold-reserve—about £180,000,000 said to be retained in the State Bank at St. Petersburg and with foreign bankers. Under such conditions the writer compared the



MARSHAL OYAMA.

"*On March 15th Marshal Oyama entered Mukden in triumph amidst a demonstratio of welcome from the Chinese officials and people,*" p. 363.

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Russian reserve to the phantom millions of the Humbert safe which figured in a recent Parisian *cause célèbre.*

Russia was now so exceedingly sensitive about her foreign credit that, on March 22nd, the Minister of Finance, M. Kokovzov, invited *The Times* to send a representative to St. Petersburg "in order to see and verify personally the gold-reserve kept in the vaults of the State Bank." The Russian "diplomatist" added: "You may bring with you trustworthy and technically trained experts in auditing gold, bullion, and moneys." The same invitation was afterwards extended to other English newspapers.

It is to be regretted that *The Times* did not accept it. "While fully appreciating your Excellency's courtesy," replied the great British newspaper, "we regret we are unable to undertake the proposed financial investigation, which hardly comes within the province of a newspaper." *The Times* further pointed out that its article "expressly acknowledged the existence of a large gold-reserve," and that the point at issue was "to what extent the Russian Government could draw upon that reserve without impairing the credit of the State."

The experts selected for such a task would need to have been exceedingly smart men; and, if their report was to have been of any practical use, they should have been prepared to assay every alleged gold coin and every alleged bar of bullion exhibited to them. The public has heard before this of Russian naval experts constructing guns and turrets out of paint and pasteboard in order to make a good appearance at an Imperial inspection of a naval dockyard. An English friend is said to have hinted to the late Duke of Edinburgh that a rumour was current to the effect that some of the turrets which His Royal Highness had inspected on such an occasion in company with his brother-in-

law, the late Tsar, were made not of metal, but of wood. The Duke is said to have replied that the statement was untrue, for he had poked his stick through an alleged conning-tower, and found it composed not of wood, but of painted paper!

Before the end of March the Japanese vanguard had advanced a hundred miles north of Mukden; the railway between Kaiyuan and the Manchurian capital had been opened for traffic; and upwards of 20,000 of the prisoners taken at Mukden had already arrived in Japan. The Liao River was opened for navigation all the way from Sinmintun to Niuchwang, and the treaty-port became quickly crowded with shipping which had been delayed at Taku and Chifu. A Japanese loan of £30,000,000 at 4½ per cent., issued at 90, was subscribed for with unprecedented enthusiasm in London and New York. "Wall Street has seldom seen such scenes as were witnessed on Wednesday (March 22nd), and never before in connection with the issue of a foreign loan";[1] and a domestic loan, issued in Japan, was also many times over-subscribed.

As Japan's purpose in going to war was to expel Russia from Manchuria and Korea, the Japanese army may be said to have achieved its principal object when it took possession of the Manchurian capital; and, looking backwards, one may now realise how masterly had been its plan of campaign. The first difficulty to be surmounted being the landing of a sufficient army on the continent of Asia, in the face of Russia's powerful Pacific fleet, it devolved upon Admiral Togo to strike the first blow, and the great sailor crippled the Russian fleet by his daring attack on Port Arthur. Japanese troops then began straightway to land in Korea, the units being despatched from the bases at

[1] *The Times'* New York correspondent.

Nagasaki and Sasebo, the oversea distance from which to Chemulpo, the port of the Korean capital, is about 450 miles. The nearest Korean ports were Masampho and Fusan, only 140 miles distant; but as there was no railway between them and Seoul, the first army was almost entirely landed at Chemulpo.

The Pacific fleet, Russia's first line of defence, betrayed the trust reposed in it by permitting the safe transport of the Japanese army. The troops having been landed, the simplicity of the Japanese scheme of operations bears eloquent testimony to its genius. If Kuropatkin's strategy, as it is alleged, was so erudite that no civilian could understand it, he who runs may now read the broad outlines of Marshal Oyama's plan of campaign.

While General Kuroki, having advanced rapidly from Seoul to Wichu, was driving the Russians across the Yalu and completely out of Korea, the second Japanese army was being landed at various points on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Liao-Tong north of Port Arthur, which is over 530 miles from Nagasaki. This army, under Generals Oku and Nogi, immediately cut off Port Arthur, and marched north-east along the railway line, its route being marked by the sites of over a dozen pitched battles. While the first and second armies were engaging the Russians, the third army, under General Nodzu, was landed at Takushun, which is about 540 miles from Nagasaki, and advancing due north, drove back the Russians concurrently with the second army on the west and the first army on the east. When the three armies joined hands before Liao-Yang, three important rivers lay between them and the Manchurian capital, namely, the Taitse-ho, Sha-ho, and Hun-ho. The battle of Liao-Yang put the united Japanese armies in command of the Taitse-ho; by the battle of the Sha-ho

they obtained command of that river; and the crowning victory of Mukden, in which General Nogi's Port Arthur army took part, put them in possession of the Hun-ho. Then, advancing northwards, they captured Tieling, situated on the Liao-ho, the main river of which the Taitse, Sha, and Hun are tributaries, and pursued the Russians still further north.

Early in April it was announced that Generals Sakharoff and Stackelberg had been recalled from the front as a consequence of the defeat at Mukden, and almost simultaneously a sheaf of boastful telegrams was published from Manchuria. "The whole rifle brigade," wired Linievitch, "informs your Majesty of its unbounded affection for, and devotion to the Throne. The men are ready to serve in the ranks with the same faith as their fathers." And Kuropatkin, not to be outdone, wired: "All the officers of the Third Siberian Corps inform your Majesty of their fervent conviction that the enemy will be vanquished, but we must have time. The 11th and 12th Siberian regiments are ready to give their lives for victory over the enemy." The Tsar, who had done nothing in the meantime to redeem the promises made in his rescript of March 3rd, was "delighted" and "sincerely touched" to learn that "the troops believed in success and a future victory over the enemy."

Such messages, *apropos* of no new achievement, indicate the workings of Russian "diplomacy" on the simplicity and obstinacy which, as Tolstoy wrote fifty years ago, constitute "the strength of the Russians."[1]

[1] "Sevastopol in December, 1854."

CHAPTER XXIV

Increasing strength of the Japanese—The new Asia—The United Kingdom's responsibility—British relations with the Kaiser—Germany's new world-empire—Expansion of America—The British Foreign Office—The British Crown, Parliament, and electorate—The British War Office—The leaders of the British nation—Results of the war for China and Russia.

THERE was boldness of design manifest in every stage of the Japanese operations; first, in the swiftness with which the Russian fleet was disabled; second, in the silence and security with which enormous bodies of troops—with abundance of ammunition and supplies, including an unrivalled hospital service—were, as it were, spirited across the seas from Japan to Manchuria; third, in the caution and determination with which, while Nogi and Togo were reducing Port Arthur, the three fighting armies advanced upon and triumphantly occupied the Manchurian capital. These combined operations constitute one of the greatest military achievements on record. The three advancing armies not only helped each other, but also divided the strength of the Russians. If Kuropatkin had concentrated all his strength on any one of them, he would have been enveloped on flank and rear by the others. He dare not throw his main force against the eastern army, because his first duty was to protect the railway on the west. Hence it was that Kuroki began the attack, and co-operating with Nodzu in a

country without a railway, had a much freer hand than General Oku, who had to break down the most stubborn Russian resistance along the railway line. The increasing strength of the Japanese assaults is especially noticeable. At Liao-Yang, though they won a great victory, they captured few prisoners, little stores, and no artillery, and the Russian casualties were 17,000. In the victory at the Sha-ho the Japanese captured a considerable number of prisoners, a large amount of artillery, killed 13,000 and wounded 33,000 Russians; while in the colossal victory at Mukden they captured over 40,000 prisoners, an incalculable quantity of artillery and stores, killed 30,000 and wounded about 60,000 Russians.

Three deductions may be safely drawn from the facts: first, that Japan did not fire a shot until she was absolutely ready for war; second, that she started with a definite plan of campaign which she carried out with silence, caution, thoroughness, and unwavering determination; third, and most important of all, that she imbued her common soldiers, who did the fighting, with the conviction that they had a direct interest in their country's success. Entirely forgetting the days of *Samurai*, who sold their worthless lives to please a territorial magnate, Japan conducted this war on a business basis with an army composed of all classes of her citizens. In many respects the spirit that animated her resembled that which glorified Elizabethan England in its contest with Spain. Each nation had had a new birth and was joyfully putting forth its strength against a mighty opponent. Every Japanese soldier, like the comrades of Francis Drake, seemed to feel that his country's victory depended on him alone; while the Russian soldiers were animated by no such spirit of responsibility and patriotism.

In some respects, also, Japan's fight with Russia

reminds one of the heroic struggle of Greece against the colossal strength of Persia; and it may be safely predicted that, in the new Asia which will now come into being, every hill and dale of Liao-Tong, especially Port Arthur and the western coast of the peninsula, will be familiar to Japanese schoolboys, and will become as famous along the Pacific coast as the hills and dales of Greece, the peninsulas and islands of the Mediterranean, have been in Europe since the revival of classical learning at the end of the fifteenth century. Japan may be called the Greece of Asia, but it is a Greece with a new conception of human happiness and human duty, fighting for civilisation on a gigantic scale as compared with the Trojan, Peloponnesian, and even Persian wars. The courage, patriotism, and education of the ancient Greeks are all repeated, under new conditions, in the Japanese; while the power, sensuality, ignorance, and barbaric splendour of the ancient Persians find their counterpart to some extent in the Russians—Kuropatkin apparently having set out to crush Japan with as much certainty as ever the Persian monarch set out to overwhelm Greece.

The first consequence of the war will naturally be the increased power of Japan, involving a predominant voice in all future settlements of China. There will be no nation strong enough henceforth to conquer her in single combat on her own ground; and it would be a matter of some difficulty to arrange a combination of Powers whose interest it would be to make the enormous sacrifices of men and money necessary to crush her.

The United Kingdom has a peculiar responsibility for the situation thus created, inasmuch as Japan's victory is indirectly attributable to the Anglo-Japanese alliance, without which she could not have embarked single-handed upon the war. Her naval triumphs,

without which her subsequent land victories could not have been achieved, were won by sailors trained on the English model. Admiral Togo himself, who may well be called the Nelson of Japan, received his naval education from the Thames Nautical Training College on board H.M.S. *Worcester* in the years 1873-4. It is not improbable that we shall still continue to influence Japan in the day of her might, when she has entered upon her inheritance in the Far East. If she has as much sagacity as the writer of these pages gives her credit for, she will be slow to make experimental alliances with other Powers. She may see for herself that there is no prosperity as solid or as lasting as British prosperity, which is always built upon a foundation of truth, industry, and justice. The methods of other countries may seem to achieve more brilliant results for a time, as, for instance, the tyrannical German method exemplified in the seizure of Kiao-Chau; or the equivocal French procedure illustrated by the exploitation of Roman Catholic Missions; or the Russian policy of pledge-breaking in Manchuria and Korea; or the combination of all three in the scheme by which Japan was compelled to surrender the Liao-Tong peninsula in 1895. But lasting success alone has abided with Great Britain throughout the centuries—because she was the one nation which was always content that her reward should be no more than the just return for the exertions she had made.

While admitting our extraordinary success in the past, one cannot help feeling that if the new situation which has arisen is to be beneficial to the United Kingdom it will necessitate some friendly revision of the relations existing between the British public, the British Government, and the British Crown. Owing to the growth of American and German foreign trade,

British citizens must now look to the Crown and Government, to a greater extent than heretofore, to assist them in maintaining their position abroad. There can be no more East India or Hudson Bay or South Africa Companies; and British "diplomatists" carry a peculiar responsibility, inasmuch as they are subject rather to the personal authority of the Sovereign than to that of Parliament. Neither the British electorate nor the members of Parliament are taken into royal or ministerial confidence, as of right, when treaties with foreign Powers are being negotiated. The commercial community are therefore compelled to look to the Crown, in an especial degree, to do its duty by them in quarters of the world where British interests are placed in competition, not only with old rivals, but with a Coming Power which seems to be destined to dominate all Asia.

If our relationship with the Kaiser and the Tsar in the Far East had not savoured so strongly of personal complaisance, Germany would not have dared to seize Kiao-Chau and claim a paramountcy in Shantung, and Russia could not have secured Port Arthur and occupied Manchuria. It has been a subject of general comment that a peculiar uniformity of kindness, quite at variance with popular sentiment in Great Britain, has characterised our Government's dealings with the German Emperor. We have been continually yielding to his pretensions, making him presents of our territory, and assisting him in his designs of commercial expansion and colonial aggrandisement. Yet it is no exaggeration to say that he has not only given us no *quid pro quo*, but has made it his business to thwart us at various critical junctures by throwing his influence into the scale of our opponents.

Our kindly behaviour towards him has not been founded on any recognised principle of business, but

would seem to be based entirely on the fact that he is a grandson of the universally lamented Queen Victoria and a nephew of our respected King. A study of our relations with Germany since Lord Salisbury first became Prime Minister in 1885 strikingly illustrates the potency of the Sovereign in the direction of our foreign affairs; and at no period since the death of William III. has the political influence of the Crown stood higher than it does at present under the premiership of Mr. A. J. Balfour. Synchronous with the growth of regal power one may notice the development of a vein of contemptuous levity in the conduct of affairs in Parliament which is entirely novel in the history of the United Kingdom. And, furthermore, the interval thus characterised by an exaltation of the Throne and a deterioration of Parliament has been commensurate with the expansion of Germany as a dangerous political and commercial rival of Great Britain. While British citizens are as fearless of competition as of old, and while they are prepared to regard the Kaiser with friendly sentiments as a near relative of our Royal Family, there is a growing feeling that it is not fair to force on them, under an unreformed convention of the British Constitution, a policy of concession towards a grasping commercial rival whose success in many fields goes far to deprive British workers of their means of livelihood.

After the fullest allowance has been made for his idiosyncrasies, the Kaiser is the most potent force in Europe at this instant. He does not conceal his ambition, and he is achieving his aim under our eyes from day to day. Within the memory of a sixth-form schoolboy he has given Germany a powerful fleet and made her influence felt all over the world. "From my mother's side," he recently said,[1] "a drop

[1] Speech at Bremen, March 22, 1905.

of sea-blood flows in my veins." And he went on to disclose his policy thus: "When I came to the Throne after my grandfather's Titanic age, I swore the oath of a soldier that I would do my utmost to keep the bayonet and cannon at rest, but I swore also that the bayonet must be kept sharp, the cannon loaded, and both in working order, so that neither jealousy nor envy looking askance at us from without might disturb us in the cultivation of our garden and in the decoration of our beautiful house." He then explained that his dreams of empire were not modelled upon the achievements of great warriors: "Upon the ground of the experience which history has taught me," he said, "I pledged myself never to strive for empty world-dominion. For what has become of the so-called world-wide empires? Alexander the Great, Napoleon the First, all the great heroes of war, swam in blood; and they left behind them nations bowed beneath the yoke which rebelled again at the first opportunity and brought these empires crumbling to their fall."

If imitation be the sincerest form which flattery can assume, British citizens should feel intensely gratified at the Kaiser's conception of what a world-wide empire ought to be, for his description is a verbal photograph of the British Empire. "The world-wide empire of which I have dreamed," he declared, "is characterised by this, that, above all, the newly-created German Empire is to enjoy the most absolute confidence on every side as a quiet, honest, and peaceful neighbour." His next words were not so perspicuous: "If ever history should come to speak of a German world-wide Empire," he said, "or of a world-wide dominion of the Hohenzollerns, this empire, this dominion, is to be founded upon conquests gained not by the sword but by the mutual confidence of those nations which

press towards the same goal. In a word, as the great poet says, 'bounded without but boundless within.'" What has Germany done to merit the confidence of "those nations which press towards the same goal" as the Kaiser? Has her conduct in China been such that all the nations concerned will be prepared to increase her "conquests" by giving her their "mutual confidence"? She has done all she could to establish Russian supremacy in the Far East, and having failed in her efforts, the Kaiser now imagines that his soft words will whistle Great Britain back to his heels and that Japan will follow the lead of her ally. Such a possibility must not be contemplated; and Germany may consider herself fortunate if she is not compelled to evacuate Kiao-Chau.

"Notwithstanding the great war," continued the Kaiser, "the period during which I grew to man's estate was neither great nor glorious for the seafaring portion of our nation. Here, too, I have drawn the logical conclusions from what my ancestors have accomplished. At home the army had been developed as far as was necessary. The time for naval armament had come. I thank God that to-day in this council-hall I need utter no despairing cry as I once did at Hamburg. The fleet is afloat and is still being built! The material for the crews is there, the zeal and the spirit of the officers is the same as those which inspired the officers of the Prussian army at Hohenfriedburg, at Koniggratz, and at Sedan; and every German battleship launched is one guarantee more for peace on earth; and it also means that our adversaries will, by so much less, be inclined to pick a quarrel with us, while it will render us by an equal amount more valuable as allies." It is scarcely probable, nevertheless, that either Great Britain, Japan, or America will desire an

alliance with Count von Waldersee and Admiral von Diedrichs in the Far East.

The Emperor is a preacher of considerable ability, and quotes the Bible with a frequency unrivalled amongst European monarchs. Neither Nicholas nor Pobiedonostseff lays claim to a more overt partnership with the Deity than does William II. He went on to exhort the rising generation of young Germans to "steadily build the structure of empire to a finish, to eschew strife, hatred, dissension, and envy, to take a pride in the German Fatherland as it is and not to strive after the impossible"!

"And, finally," he exclaimed, as if under the influence of an inspiration, "cherish the firm conviction that our Lord and God would never have given Himself such pains with our German Fatherland and its people if He had not predestined us to something great! We are the salt of the earth; but we must also prove ourselves worthy of this high calling. Therefore our young generation must learn to refuse and to deny itself all that is not good for it, to keep at a distance the contagion of everything which is introduced like a disease from foreign lands, to preserve good morals, discipline and order, reverence and religious feeling. That done, may it be one day written of the German people as it stands written on the helmets of my first regiment of guards, *Semper Talis*—'Always so great'! Then we shall be regarded on all sides with respect, on some even with affection, as safe and trustworthy people, and we shall be able to stand with our hand upon our sword-hilt, our shield resting before us on the ground, and say *Tamen*—'Come what may'!"

If Japan's victory over Russia were to produce no more remarkable result than the chastening of the German Emperor's spirit, Marshal Oyama and Admiral

Togo could not be said to have trained their guns entirely in vain. What a moderation of tone since the despatch of Prince Henry to China in 1898 with orders to strike heavily with his "mailed fist"! And how mild is the Kaiser's language as compared with the speech at Bremerhaven to Waldersee's departing legions in 1900: "No quarter will be given, no prisoners will be taken. Let all who fall into your hands be at your mercy"! Germans no longer demand a kowtow from the Far East; they only desire to "be regarded on all sides with respect as safe and trustworthy people," and, in some unimaginable contingency, to "be regarded even with affection"! It was, presumably, with some such end in view that Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia had set out for the Far East at the beginning of March, 1905, with instructions to pay a visit to the Chinese Court, and afterwards, if that were possible, to join the Russian army.

But we must not place much reliance on the tone of the Kaiser's speeches, which vary as frequently and as suddenly as the face of the waters in the shallow German Ocean. We must resist his unjust claims, and hold ourselves in readiness for a trial of strength with other formidable rivals as well. Concurrently with the advance of Germany and the growth of Royal influence in British politics, the Americans also have made extraordinary strides in competition with us in many parts of the world. In the short space of twenty years they have established a strong position for themselves in the foreign politics of the world, and in many instances at our expense.[1] It is not easy to recall an important diplomatic negotiation with America in recent times in which this country can be said to have been successful. And while American

[1] The Panama Canal and Alaskan boundary concessions to America, for instance.

public men—and more especially their diplomatists—seem to be selected on grounds of personal capacity, our Foreign Office officials are appointed on a principle which rests more upon Court favour than on popular control or personal fitness.

We send forth battalions of "men of fashion" to conduct business negotiations on our behalf with the keenest business men and politicians of the United States. The consequence is that, while American diplomacy has shut all Europe out from expansion in the western hemisphere by its insistence on the Monroe doctrine, America has been extending herself not only in the western but also in the eastern hemisphere; and, as we have seen, in her latest Note to the Powers, she speaks of her "large commercial interests in the Pacific and in China," and her "important possessions in the region which gives access" to the Chinese Empire. In America no treaty can be concluded without public discussion and ratification by the Senate; but in Great Britain all negotiations with foreign Powers are conducted without consultation with the British citizens or their representatives, being regarded by our Constitution as the personal business of the Sovereign, in whom is vested the sole right to conclude them, as well as the power to declare peace or war on his own initiative. We have no second chamber in the sense that America and Germany, and even Japan, possess higher deliberative and legislative assemblies. All the responsibility of discussion and legislation is thrown upon a House of Commons which does not seem to be able to maintain its position as against the ministerial bureaucracy and the Crown.

It is not too much to say that the Sovereign who aims at successfully directing the foreign policy of this Empire will have his hands full in the fight for

supremacy which is now upon us; and, since we do not seem prepared to adopt an autocratic form of government, it is to be hoped that the decadence of Parliament may be arrested before it becomes the forerunner of national decadence. It is difficult to remember a period when the responsibilities of citizenship in the United Kingdom were rated at a lower level than they seem to be at present. Election after election continues to be contested throughout the country upon side-issues, many of which are unintelligible and not a few of them absurd, while the true facts of the national position are never adequately considered at the hustings. Despite the improvement which has taken place, cheering, groaning, fighting, personal recrimination, and party trickery still usurp the place of intelligent discussion; and a general election continues to be a period of uproar and confusion rather than a time of thoughtful questioning and searching of hearts. Our electoral arrangements seem designed to hustle the burgesses rather than to assist them in calmly considering the best interests of the country. Thus Government succeeds Government, each entering upon a career of shiftiness, disappointing those who secured its return, temporising with the ill-expressed wishes of the electorate, pursuing a policy of equivocation and subterfuge towards the people's representatives, and finally sinking into a position of complete subservience to the Crown and the territorial magnates who, alone amongst the inhabitants of these realms, act unceasingly upon the mandate: *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."*

The less of secrecy there is in our dealings with other countries, the better will it be for the prospects of general peace. If confidence in the citizens is

necessary in foreign affairs, it is still more requisite in the management of our War Office. We cannot rely much longer upon finding thousands of able-bodied men, even in the lowest strata of our social system, who will be ready to risk their lives blindly for the benefit of a ruling caste. The chivalrous spirit which inspires individuals to sacrifice themselves for the preservation of others will endure as long as human nature itself; but men of good character and capacity will not court death in a dangerous campaign, the conduct of which is in the hands of highly-paid officials and money-making contractors, without any definite prospect of personal reward. The incentive of racial hate is a fast-diminishing force. Even Frenchmen will not rush at the throats of Germans. Russians, low in the scale of nations though they be, can no longer be lashed up to fury by appeals from the Holy Tsar to uphold a Throne, an Orthodox Faith, a baby Tsarevitch, or a Fatherland from which they reap no advantage. And assuredly Britishers will not imbue their hands in blood except on the soundest of reasons. In the days of old, under Marlborough and Wellington, the scamp of the family and the gutter-sparrows of our towns and villages, devoid alike of education and common sense, were considered to be the best fighting men. But, henceforth, brains, shrewdness, and, above all, the sense of citizenship, will be indispensable in a successful soldier, and men possessed of those qualifications will be increasingly reluctant to enlist under the banner of a War Office which, even to a greater extent than the Foreign Office, is conducted as a personal appanage of the Crown; which has been proved to be a nest of favouritism and a hotbed of intrigue, managed in the interests of an upper class anxious only for its own amusement and comfort at the expense of the citizens.

The electorate of the United Kingdom have a right to be taken into the confidence of their Government while an international dispute is in its initial stages. At present all that they or their members of Parliament are privileged to hear is that some foreign sovereign, for instance, is visiting the King at Buckingham Palace, or at Windsor, and that a few of the King's rich acquaintances have been invited to meet him at dinner; but they never hear more than the vaguest rumour as to what may have been the real purpose of the visit.[1] It is only when war is already inevitable, and when money and men are required to prosecute it, that the British public are taken into the confidence of their King and Government, and then there is such feverish excitement that neither the citizens nor their representatives can come to any calm conclusion on the merits of the question at issue. We are hustled into war just as we are hustled into general elections.

While according the fullest measure of respect to all those in high stations in this realm, and especially to our honoured Sovereign, it cannot be denied that we need patriotism, brains, energy, and business capacity at the head of our army and navy, amongst our diplomatists, and in our Parliament. Do we possess them? Is the immense patronage which is vested in the Crown dispensed only amongst the best qualified? Are the titled aristocracy and its connections able to supply us with the best leaders? Are our richly-endowed parsons qualified to educate young Britishers to meet the American, German, and Japanese on a footing of equality in the new era upon which we are entering? Does a Duke of Connaught make a promising substitute, we shall not say for an

[1] *Ex grege*, the visit of Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria in March, 1905.

Arthur Wellesley, but for a Garnet Wolseley, or a Frederick Sleigh Roberts whom he has superseded? Is a Prince of Battenberg likely to be a latent Nelson or Francis Drake? Is the House of Lords all that we require in a higher deliberative and legislative assembly? Do our leading politicians display the earnestness, ability, and patriotism, we shall not say of Pitt or Fox, but even of Disraeli, Bright, Forster, or Gladstone?

We have to face the fact that our commercial supremacy is being successfully contested, though the volume of our trade as yet remains undiminished, and that our keenest rivals, the Americans and Germans, are laying down fleets which threaten our command of the seas. One can sympathise with, though one may not join in, the despair expressed by a patriotic Englishman like Lord Rosebery—himself the capable Foreign Secretary of the last Liberal Administration—when one contrasts the methods of the conquerors in this great Asiatic war, which we have been considering, with the colossal mistakes made by the victors in that other recent great war against the Boers; for a repetition of our South African experiment on a larger scale might prove calamitous.

If our leaders are competent in the discharge of the high duties which they will be called upon to perform in the near future, then we may contemplate that future without anxiety. But if they are not competent—and their sufficiency seems at least open to question—then let us reconsider their position and our own.

The quiescence of China during the war was remarkable. Kwang-Su, Tszu-Hszi, the princes, the officials of all ranks, the ministers, and the secret societies were as silent as the graves of their ancestors, while Manchuria, the native land of the dynasty and

site of the Imperial tombs, was being converted into the cock-pit of Asia. Although, at various stages between 1898 and 1905, China seemed to have been coquetting with Russia, it was evident now that she had found the caresses of the bear more coercive than persuasive; and her people were rejoiced at the prospect of seeing the Russians driven north of the Amur. "When the Russians pass through Chinese towns," said an eye-witness, "the inhabitants shut the doors of their houses, but they go to meet the Japanese with their wives and children dressed in their best clothes."[1]

It is not too much to hope that the victory of Japan may convince Kwang-Su and his mentor Tszu-Hszi that the only royal road by which a modern nation can attain to greatness lies in the establishment of complete confidence between the rulers and the ruled. A great career may possibly be in store for Kwang-Su, if he be spared to become the first Emperor of a reformed China. It would have been a distinct loss to the human race if, in 1898, China had been split up into a number of subordinate provinces managed on the system of French Indo-China, or even of Burma, however admirable may be our British administration. It is not good for the world that large areas of land and millions of people should remain in a condition of subjection which tends to obliterate individuality and stifle the genius of independence. If China henceforth be subject to Japanese influence, its work-loving and peaceful inhabitants will become enlightened; the development of industries will give them full occupation for head and hand; and China may once again become a light to the world—taking the manufactures of Europe and America, giving both countries her

[1] *The Times'* Sipinghai correspondent, March, 22, 1905.



THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG.

During the fighting round Liao-yang, the ammunition gave out on both sides and recourse was had to stones. "On Sunday, Sept. 4th, at 1.30 p.m., Marshal Oyama reported that Liao Yang had fallen entirely into his hands," p. 241.

[*To face p.* 396.

own useful products in return, and opening up vast fields for European, and especially British, enterprise and speculation.

With regard to Russia—"where the most ignorant bigotry in the darkest of the Christian creeds is the law and fashion which from the Court is diffused downwards; and where a single man's will, even if he has none, is the supreme controlling law"[1]—it is not easy to be sanguine. It is sixty-three years ago since Austen Henry Layard—that bravest of pioneers, to whom the world is mainly indebted for its knowledge of Assyrian civilisation—illustrated the capacity of the Russians for prolonged political intrigues. In 1842 Russian spies were fomenting disturbance in Bosnia, Servia, and Bulgaria. "Secret societies," wrote Layard, "were directed and supported by secret committees in Russia and by Russian agents.[2] In Servia a revolution was in progress "to resist the undue interference of Russia in its government." The British Ambassador sympathised with the Servians; but "Russia *had induced Lord Aberdeen to adopt the opposite view*." And Layard says: "The influence of England was great in the East, and the word of an Englishman was everywhere accepted as a pledge which would never be violated." "Every effort," he writes, "was made by Russia, through her Embassy and her agents, secret and avowed, to thwart the policy of" the British Ambassador. "The Russian minister, a crafty, vigilant, and far-seeing diplomatist, was ever active in intrigue." He was "calm, cautious, and restrained; endeavouring to obtain his ends by cajolery, and by leading his victims by gentle and persuasive means to their destruction."

[1] "Impressions of Russia," by Georg Brandes, translated by C. Eastman.

[2] "Early Adventures," by Sir H. Layard. London: John Murray.

The portraits of Russians published in this book show how sleek and well-groomed they are, men unacquainted with work, members of a ruling caste, who live in luxury by keeping 140 millions of fellow-creatures in semi-slavery. It is not by force that such a feat is accomplished, but rather by a diplomacy of false religion, spurious justice, broken promises, reptile newspapers, and pretended patriotism, tempered with the coercion of the dungeon and the knout. It is thus the Russians perfect themselves in "diplomacy"; and they exercise the art at leisure on foreign nations, including Great Britain, which, as Carlyle put it, is "logically very stupid and wise chiefly by instinct," and whose sons are the antithesis of all that is Russian, being "frank, simple, rugged, yet courteous."

From 1842 to 1854 our Government suffered itself to be persistently imposed upon by diplomatic untruths, and when Lord Aberdeen became Prime Minister, we had to draw the sword in the Crimean war. In 1877, when Layard was appointed ambassador to the Porte, Russia's long intrigue of thirty-five years in the Balkans had culminated in the Russo-Turkish war of 1876–1878; and the Tsar would have acquired Constantinople then but for the determination of Lord Beaconsfield's Government. Kuropatkin served as a junior in that war, and he was referring to our intervention, when, before starting to Manchuria, he declared: "We will never allow Great Britain to intervene and prevent us from profiting by our hard-earned victory. Korea will be Russian." The Russians won the sympathy of the English Liberals by proclaiming that the war of 1876–1878 was a war for Christ against Mahomet. Alexieff and Pobiedonostseff endeavoured to fan the flames of religious bigotry in this war; but they elicited no sympathy, and the "diplomatists" did not make religion a plank in their platform. Europe

had not forgotten that Kishineff, the scene of the recent massacres of Jews, is in the Russian province of Bessarabia, the boundaries of which were extended as the result of the war of 1876–1878.

If left to pursue her devices, Russia would have dismembered China without fighting a battle, relying upon "diplomacy" with, perhaps, the assistance of a massacre or two like that at Blagovestchenk—her conduct up to 1904 having been modelled on her policy in Poland from the first partition in 1772 to the establishment of a provincial government at Warsaw in 1847.

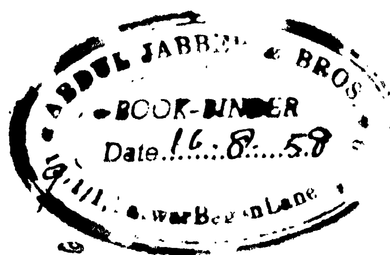
If Russia is now permanently excluded from China it will not be to Russia's disadvantage. She is not competent to enter into *bona-fide* competition with trading Powers like the United Kingdom and the United States; and, as long as national impecuniosity, slavery, illiteracy, official dishonesty, natural vice, and law-manufactured crime flourish within her own borders, it will be criminal folly for her to embark upon a career of aggrandisement in Manchuria or Central Asia by a "diplomacy" of treaty-breaking and bill-endorsing.

It would be fortunate for Russia now if the Tsar had the strength of mind to take his defeat as a fatherly admonition from that Deity with whom he pretends to hold such intimate relations, warning him that the time has come for the Russian autocracy to change its ways. The Tsar is still a young man, and Russia is still a young nation. It is only 180 years since the death of Peter the Great, who created the Russian Empire as we know it to-day; who married a professed *nymphe du pave*, and had her publicly crowned empress; who, when intoxicated, used to act as his own executioner and behead a score of men in quick succession for the purpose of displaying his dexterity with the sword;

and abolished the patriarchate and appointed himself Head of the Greek Church and Vicegerent of God in all the Russias. When one remembers the first Peter, one does not regret that the present Tsar is not a strong man. Most accounts of him agree that he is not a bad man; and assuredly his family connections are excellent, amongst them being the Queen of Great Britain, who is his mother's sister. If he were anxious for rational direction as to how to act, he could not seek advice from a more desirable quarter; and, if he does so, it may not be impossible to convince him, from the pages of English history, that it is only by settling internal difficulties, establishing a genuine system of representative government, discarding the advice of such men as Pobiedonostseff, and putting the finances of his empire on a satisfactory footing, that he may find enduring happiness for himself and security for his dynasty, and make his people happy and contented at home. It is by developing the vast resources of his empire between the Baltic and the Pacific, rather than by spreading his boundaries farther, that he may most speedily confer the blessings of industry and prosperity on his subjects.

If the result of the war convinces the Tsar that he has yet to learn the first elements of true Christianity, and induces him to treat his people as brethren rather than as slaves; if it admonishes the Manchu dynasty and the official caste at Peking that they have duties as well as rights towards their Chinese compatriots, and that the path of duty is the path of safety for them as for all men and women; if it awakens Russia and China alike to the value of scientific education and representative institutions; then assuredly this ordeal by battle, terrific and bloody as it has been, will have conferred an immeasurable benefit on the human race.

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